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ABSTRACT

This study inquired into matters related to the school year and the school day and, more specifically, reviewed relevant literature, including provincial acts and regulations from Alberta and other Canadian provinces; determined the manner in which relevant sections of Alberta legislation have been operationalized; analyzed the opinions and preferences of trustees, superintendents, principals, teachers, and parents; and provided recommendations for possible alternatives to existing legislation and operational modes. It was found that, on the average, Alberta schools offered about 190 days of instruction in 1975-76 and that the average amount of instructional time was five hours a day. The groups surveyed expressed general satisfaction with the present length of the school year and the amount of instructional time provided students, and a desire that the traditional summer vacation period be maintained. Among the recommendations was one urging that caution be exercised in the use of the traditional summer vacation period for mandatory instructional activity. (Author/IRT)

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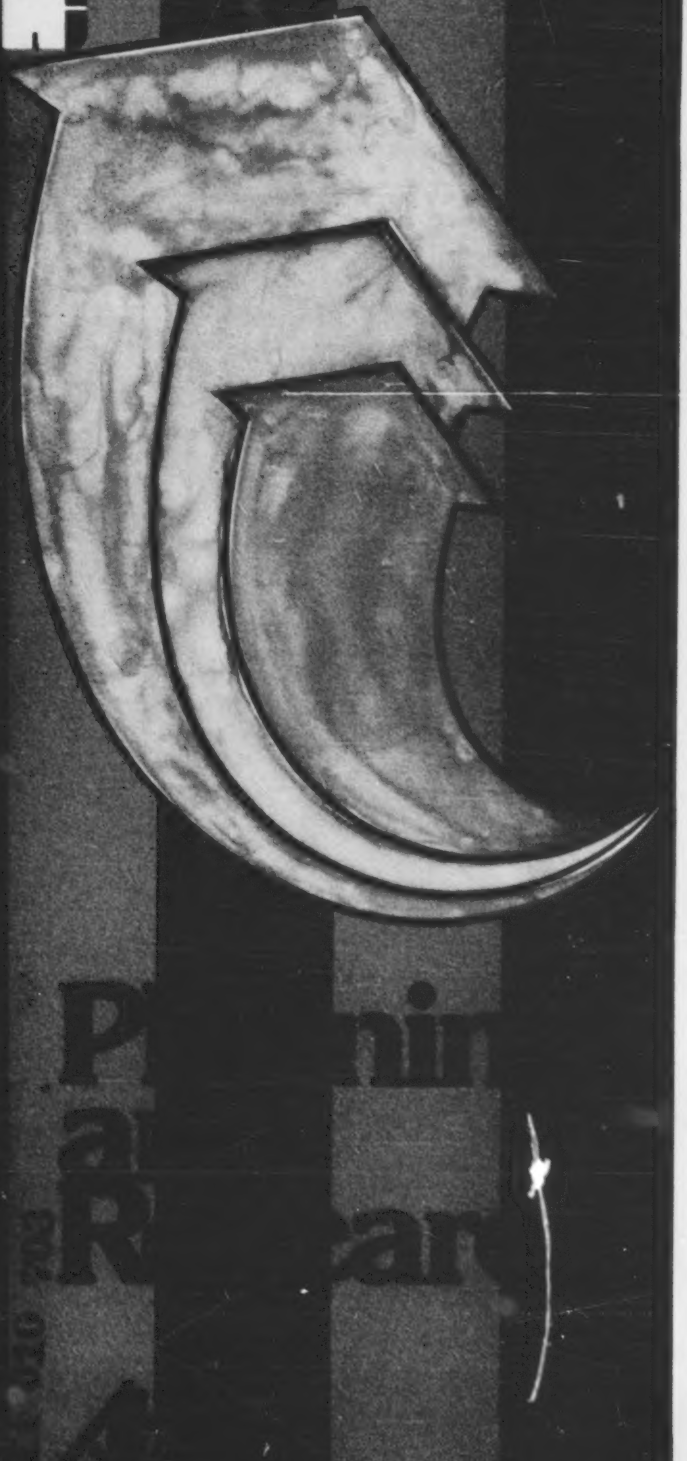

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SCHOOL YEAR/SCHOOL DAY PRACTICES AND PREFERENCES IN ALBERTA

OCTOBER 31, 1977

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A STUDY CONDUCTED UNDER
CONTRACT TO ALBERTA EDUCATION,
EDMONTON ALBERTA

SCHOOL YEAR/SCHOOL DAY PRACTICES
AND PREFERENCES IN ALBERTA

A STUDY CONDUCTED UNDER CONTRACT TO
ALBERTA EDUCATION, EDMONTON ALBERTA

by

T. E. Giles
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The University of Calgary
Calgary, Alberta, Canada

October 31, 1977

Letter of Transmittal

To: The Honourable Julian Koziak
Minister of Education of the Province of Alberta

Sir:

We, the undersigned members of the project team commissioned to study school year/school day practices and preferences in accordance with the contract terms established, have the honour to submit the attached report.

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ABSTRACT

The School Year [illegible] Day Study was initiated by The Alberta School Trustees' Association, financed by Alberta Education, supervised by a Steering Committee composed of representatives from major interest groups and conducted by a team from The University of Calgary.

The intent of the study was to inquire into matters related to the school year and school day and, more specifically, to:

1. Review relevant literature including provincial acts and regulations from Alberta and other Canadian provinces.

2. Determine the manner in which relevant sections of Alberta legislation have been operationalized.

3. Analyze the opinions and preferences of selected Alberta interest groups.

4. Provide recommendations for possible alternatives to existing legislation and operational modes.

The necessary information concerning Canadian provinces was collected from official documents and personal correspondence. Questionnaires were used to solicit data about (1) Alberta school practice in the 1969-70 and 1975-76 school years and (2) the preferences of trustees, superintendents, principals, teachers and parents. Interviews with selected individuals provided supplementary information.

As for Alberta practice, the salient findings were that:

1. On the average, Alberta schools offered in the 1975-76 school year about 190 days of instruction or 1.5 days less than they did in 1969-70.

2. The average days of instruction provided by Alberta schools appeared to be consistent with prevailing requirements of other Canadian provinces.

3. The average amount of instructional time made available in an Alberta school day, for both the 1969-70 and 1975-76 school years, was five hours.

4. The amount of instructional time provided in the Alberta school day was found to be consistent with that required in most Canadian provinces.

5. While some variations in the length of the instructional year and day were noted among the three operational levels (elementary, junior high and senior high), the variations were consistent between the two school years studied indicating that legislative changes made in Alberta in 1970 had little apparent operational impact.

Regarding the preferences expressed, it was found that:

1. There existed general satisfaction with the present length of the school year and the amount of instructional time provided students.

2. There was a general desire that the traditional summer vacation period of July and August be maintained.

3. Decisions related to the school year and school day, in the main, were preferred to be made at the local level of operation.

The study team recommendations indicated a need for:

1. Greater precision in the definition of relevant terms.

2. Caution in the use of the traditional summer vacation period for mandatory instructional activity.

3. A prescribed minimum amount of available instructional time for students at all levels.

4. Considerable discretionary power for the local level of operation.

5. All schools to provide parents and students with a calendar of the instructional year.

6. The gathering of more extensive school year/school day data.

7. A comprehensive research program to support policy-making endeavors.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Recognition is due to a large number of people without whose willing assistance this study would not have reached fruition.

The project team wishes to express sincere appreciation to the parents, principals, superintendents, teachers and trustees who responded to questionnaires. Of these groups special recognition must be given to the principals who responded not only to the preferences questionnaire but gave appreciable extra time to provide data on the 1969-70 and 1975-76 school years for their schools as well.

Gratitude is extended to the officials of the Alberta Department of Education who provided assistance with various aspects of this study; particularly Dr. W. Duke, Dr. J. Hrabi, Dr. J. Reid and Dr. B. Stringham.

Thanks must go to the Superintendents, as well as to the officials of The Alberta School Trustees' Association, The Alberta Teachers' Association and regional offices of Alberta Education who granted personal interviews.

Appreciation is extended to the officials of the various Departments of Education, teachers' associations and trustees' associations across Canada who so generously supplied information concerning current statutes, regulations and policies on the matters of school year and school day.

Each member of the steering committee facilitated the work of the project team during the course of the study and for their

contributions they deserve particular acknowledgment. The members were:

Janet Anderson, A.F.H.S.A.

Judy Anderson, A.S.T.A. (Chairperson)

W. P. Eddy, Department of Education (Secretary)

G. L. Fowler, C.A.S.S.

W. L. Hughes, A.T.A.

R. Marrinier, Department of Education.

Typing was provided by Mrs. E. Carmichael, Mrs. M. Ross, and Mrs. J. Wren of the Department of Educational Administration, Faculty of Education, The University of Calgary and to these ladies we extend a special note of gratitude.

PREFACE

The Executive of The Alberta School Trustees' Association proposed in correspondence to Alberta Education (dated March 18, 1976), that there be undertaken a school year/day study which would serve "to facilitate future school board planning efforts and decision-making regarding school board operations." The need for the study was outlined as follows:

> School boards, when making decisions regarding school operations, are required by The School Act, Section 139, to establish the school year/day to facilitate student access to the program of instruction. In so doing, the boards must meet definitional requirements--"day," "day in a school year," "school year," "days of school operation," "vacation periods," and "school holiday." However, in order for school boards to meet legislated requirements and fulfill their responsibilities, they must turn to Section 74 which is located and written in the context of a labor code and thus, negotiable--the consequences of which directly impinge on student access to the educational opportunity provided.
>
> Prior to implementation of current legislation, the then current operational requirements, Sections 377-384 of The School Act (1955), were properly consolidated and located, rather specific, but first and foremost, clearly understood and complied with, leaving little opportunity to tamper with instructional guarantees accorded the student. Legislation, revised in 1970 and practice ensuing therefrom, has created a decision-making setting in which "operational" diversity may have resulted in undetermined results possessing the potential for effecting undesirable conditions.

The Director of Planning and Research, Alberta Education, subsequently indicated in a memo (dated June 1, 1976) to the Deputy Minister that the "Directors' Council has endorsed the recommendations of an ad hoc committee . . . that the Department react favorably to this proposed study . . . ."

In November, 1976, the Planning and Research Branch sent out requests for proposals from prospective bidders selected by the Steering Committee for the study. The members of the Steering Committee were:

Judy Anderson, chairperson, representing The Alberta School Trustees' Association

Janet Anderson, representing The Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations

W. P. Eddy, secretary, representing the Planning and Research Branch, Alberta Education

G. L. Fowler, representing the Conference of Alberta School Superintendents

W. L. Hughes, representing The Alberta Teachers' Association

R. Marrinier, representing the Field Services Branch, Alberta Education.

Early in February, 1977, F. T. Johnson was advised that the Steering Committee had selected the proposal submitted by him and three other members of the Department of Educational Administration, The University of Calgary. The members of the project study team were F. T. Johnson (project director), H. E. Walker, T. E. Giles and W. G. Roberts.

The charge assigned to the project team in the "Specific Conditions of Contract" was to "examine the operation of the School Act (1970 with amendments) and the effects on students." More specifically, those responsible for conducting the study were to:

1. Review relevant literature pertaining to Alberta and other Canadian provinces.

2. Examine provincial acts and regulations related to the school year and school day.

3. Determine the manner in which those matters referred to in Sections 139 and 74 of The Alberta School Act (1970) have

been operationalized.

4. Analyze the opinions held by members of selected groups as to preferences for:

   a. school opening and closing dates and the time and duration of Christmas and spring breaks.

   b. the assignment of relevant decision-making responsibility and authority.

5. Submit recommendations for possible alternatives to existing legislation and operational modes.

Immediately following the awarding of the contract, the project team developed a detailed study design and the necessary instrumentation. With minor exceptions, both the proposed design and instrumentation were approved by the Steering Committee at a meeting held March 1, 1977.

Regarding the Alberta scene, the design provided for a questionnaire-type survey of:

1. Relevant operations in the school years 1969-70 and 1975-76 of all of the 1314 schools functioning at the time of the study.

2. The opinions and preferences of:

   a. all of the province's 1314 school principals, 931 school trustees and 99 school superintendents.

   b. a random sample of 1275 Alberta school teachers and 1000 parents holding membership in The Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations.

The response rate, in terms of usable returns, displayed considerable variation. Returns regarding the operations in the school years 1969-70 and 1975-76 were 54% and 64% respectively. As for the opinions and preferences survey, the response rates were as follows:

Superintendents	84%
Teachers	61%
Principals	46%
Parents	25%
Trustees	23%

In addition to the foregoing, the project team attempted to assess past and current practices and problems by conducting a number of interviews. During the design phase interviews were held with seven officials of Alberta Education. Once the design was completed and data collection began, interviews were held with 42 school superintendents or their designees as well as with one person from each of four of the five regional offices of Alberta Education. Contact also was made with officers of The Alberta School Trustees' Association and The Alberta Teachers' Association in an attempt to identify the policy positions of the two organizations.

As for the gathering of information related to policies and practices in areas of Canada other than Alberta, letters of inquiry were directed to the Departments of Education of all provinces and territories as well as to provincial teacher, trustee and parent-teacher organizations. Information was also solicited from the Canadian Education Association. Information provided by these sources and referred to in the study is identified, for the convenience of the reader, in the body of the report rather than in a separate reference section.

The chapters that follow present a detailed account of the information gathered in the period February through June, 1977, along with the conclusions and recommendations formulated by the project team.

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Chapter 1

SCOPE OF THE SCHOOL YEAR, SCHOOL DAY STUDY

The Alberta School Act of 1970 contains one section, Section 139, that specifies School Board responsibilities regarding the school year and school day, and at least two other sections, Sections 74 and 90, that refer to aspects of the school year and school day that are subject to negotiation between school boards and teachers.

Section 139 states:

(1) A Board shall

- (a) specify the school opening date
- (b) specify the number and the days of school operation
- (c) specify the length of the school day and the number of minutes of school operation, and
- (d) specify the number of minutes of classroom instruction and the number and length of recesses.

(2) A board shall specify the vacation periods in a year but

- (a) the minimum Christmas vacation shall extend from December 24 to January 2, inclusive, and
- (b) for each pupil there shall be provided the opportunity of taking one school vacation of at least four consecutive week's duration during a school year.

(3) A board in its discretion may declare one day a month to be a school holiday.

(4) A holiday declared by a municipality does not apply to a school within the municipality unless the board declares it to apply.

(5) A board shall, before May 31 in each year, give notice to the Minister stating

- (a) the opening and closing dates of all schools under its jurisdiction for the 12 months next following, and
- (b) the dates of the vacation periods in the school year.

(6) Where a board wishes to declare Farmers' Day to be a holiday, Farmers' Day shall be declared by the board to be a holiday on the second Friday of June in any year.

Section 74 states, in part,

(1) In this section "day" or "day in a school year" means a day on which instruction is given by a teacher and includes emergency school closures, school closures approved by the Minister, two days for teacher conventions, holidays declared by a board and days other than instruction days that are approved by the Minister.

(2) Unless a teacher agrees, a board may not require a teacher to instruct pupils

(a) for more than 330 minutes during a day, or
(b) for less than 190 or more than 200 days in a school year.

The former School Act, 1955, was much more specific in regards to matters pertaining to the school year and school day. The school year was prescribed in Sections 376 to 384 with an opening date on or after the first of September and a closing date of the thirtieth of June which required the provision of as near as possible for 200 operating days in the school year. Provision was also made for Christmas and Easter vacations, statutory holidays, as well as some discretion for the declaration of additional holidays.

Whether such changes in the legal basis for the school years have caused changes in the operationalized practices pertaining to the school year and the school day is a question which the project team considered throughout the study. This report attempts to address the question and, in chapter three, to give particular attention to this issue.

A second need for this study resides in the expressed concern in certain educational circles that the amount of instructional time has decreased during the time the new School Act has been in vogue. Whether there has or has not been such an erosion in the amount of teacher-student contact time for instructional purposes is another question which the project team considered and which this report attempts to answer.

A third need for the study emerges from the ever-changing societal forces impinging on the schools. That the nine-to-ten week summer vacation arose from the need to cease instruction because classrooms were unbearably hot during the summer is a fact of history. Does that need exist today now that air-conditioned schools are possible? Or, does a significant segment of the public prefer shorter summer vacations and compensatory longer Christmas vacations? Easter, traditionally, was a religious holiday. Does the public at large wish to retain this school vacation? Or, does having a Spring break mid-way between Christmas and the summer vacation have more appeal? These and similar questions caused the project team to examine the degree to which present practices related to the school year are acceptable to the public. Chapter four of this report gives considerable attention to this issue of public acceptance and public desires for change.

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The overall purpose of the study was to examine the operation of the relevant sections of the School Act (1970 with amendments), to examine the practice with regards to the school year and school day both before the passage of the Act and at the current time, to examine the Act in keeping with the general purposes of the study for possible omissions, ambiguities, conflicts, or inconsistencies, and to examine the literature in Alberta and other provinces for comparative purposes.

The study had four major components:

1. Review of the literature on the concepts and definitions of school year and school day.

2. Determination of the school year and school day practices in Alberta schools and school systems prior to the School Act (1970) and subsequently.

3. Determination of the preferences held by significant interest groups for the school year and school day practices.

4. Generation of conclusions and recommendations.

Component 1: Literature review. This component of the study involved a review and summary of the relevant literature on school year and school day to determine the current practices in each of the Canadian Provinces.

Component 2: Status of school year and school day practices in Alberta during the pre and post 1970 period. This component of the study surveyed the practices of school year and school day in the elementary, junior and senior high schools of Alberta both for the 1969-70 school year and the 1975-76 school year.

Two surveys were used to obtain the necessary data. An interview survey of superintendents and selected personnel from The Alberta Teachers' Association, The Alberta School Trustees' Association and The Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations sought information on: (1) problems caused by definitions, omissions, inconsistencies within the School Act (1970); (2) perceived changes between 1969 and 1975 in the operational practices related to the school year and school day; and (3) preferences concerning school year and school day practices. A more detailed questionnaire survey of all principals in the public and separate school systems of Alberta returned specific information about school year and school day practices during the 1969-70 school year and the 1975-76 school year.

Component 3: Preferences held by various interest groups. This component of the study surveyed the opinions of professional educators and the lay public regarding school year and school day practices.

A survey questionnaire was used to obtain the necessary data. It sought information on: preferred school opening and closing dates; preferred time and length of school vacations and other holidays; preferred amount of teacher-student contact time for instruction; and preferred responsibility levels at which decisions should be made concerning school year practices. Specific information was obtained from trustees, superintendents, principals, teachers and parents across the province both in the public and the separate school systems.

Component 4: Generating recommendations and implications. This section of the study used the findings of the preceding sections as a basis for deriving conclusions and for generating recommendations. Possible future changes with respect to the school year and school day are presented.

OUTLINE OF THE REPORT

The second chapter is a report on Component 1, the review of the literature on school year and school day in the provinces of

Canada. Chapter 3 presents the findings of the survey of school year practices and trends occurring between 1969 and 1976. The preference information from trustees, superintendents, principals, teachers and parents is contained in Chapter 4. Interview data concerning problems associated with school year practices are presented in Chapter 5. The final chapter presents a summary of the study findings, and the conclusions and recommendations concerning the school year in the schools of Alberta.

During the course of the study the researchers were requested to obtain information about the amount of time teachers are in contact with students outside regular classroom instruction. A survey questionnaire of a sample of Alberta school teachers returned information concerning this issue. The findings of this survey are included as an appendix to the report.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter is to present an overview of past, present and possible future thought and practice on the subject of the school year and school day. The chapter is divided into four sections. The first section sets the stage for a study of the Alberta school year by presenting a brief look back into the historical background of school practices with respect to the length of the school year and day. The second section reports the current written policies and regulations of each Provincial Department of Education across Canada concerning various aspects of the school year and the school day. In the third section, an attempt is made to synthesize and summarize the information presented. The final section presents an overview of certain possible trends in the implementation of school year and school day practices in certain of the Canadian provinces.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND*

The length of the school year, the corresponding length of vacations and the length of the instructional day have varied from one Canadian province to another throughout the years. Schools of the early nineteenth-century had winter or summer terms of six months. At mid-century a chief concern of the authorities was to lengthen the school year to ten months or more which, in turn, focussed the question of vacation periods.

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*Material for this section of the report is paraphrased from Phillips discussion of length of the "school year" and the "school day [Phillips, pp. 242-244]."

In Prince Edward Island a special committee in 1839 recommended a twelve month school year less three weeks of vacation: ten days in May, eleven days in October, Christmas Day, Good Friday, and alternate Saturdays. In 1852 the vacations were extended to: June, one week; October, one week; December 24th to January 6th; and every other Saturday. In B.C. in 1872 the schools were given a five-day week, a two-week Christmas vacation, and four weeks in the summer. In New Brunswick in 1884 the summer vacation was set at four weeks and a maximum of ten other days as holidays. Towards the end of the century these less than generous attitudes began to change and from then on it became common practice for schools to be closed in July and August, for approximately a week at Christmas and Easter, on statutory holidays, and on all Saturdays.

A number of factors may be credited with bringing about this change. Provincial legislation in the form of compulsory attendance regulations improved student attendance which, in turn, meant that students could learn the same amount in a shorter school year. Financial payments to school boards were tied to pupil attendance creating a similar effect. Teachers pressed boards and authorities for a shorter teaching year to facilitate professional development. Most important, perhaps, the growing study of education and the outpourings of psychology, persuaded society that children needed time for activities other than school studies.

It has been said that "if distance from school and chores at home had not been considerations, early nineteenth-century schools like those of early Rome might have been opened from dawn to dusk [Phillips, p.244]." Consideration of the child's welfare could hardly have been a factor during that era. For, as Phillips has described, in New Brunswick "in 1812 the hours of attendance were set at 6:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in May, June, July and August with two breaks of two hours each; only of necessity in the darker months was the day proportionately shorter [Phillips, p.244]." By the 1870's, the 330-minute school day was established. In British Columbia in 1872 the hours were 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon and 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. from April to September, and from 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon and 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. from October to March. By the end of the century, gradually, the present nine-to-ten month school year and five-to-five and one-half hour day were developed.

CURRENT WRITTEN PROVINCIAL POLICIES

Policies reported in this section were extracted from the public school acts and regulations of each of the Canadian provinces, excluding Alberta, from the official policy documents for certain specified Teachers' Associations and from relevant policy documents for certain specified Trustees' Associations.

Newfoundland

Sections of The Schools Act (1970) governing the School Year.

Section 2(dd). "School Year" means a year commencing on the first day of July in a calendar year and ending on the thirtieth day of June in the calendar year next following.

Section 51. Subject to Sections 52, 53, 54 and 55, the Ministers shall, before the first day of June in each year and after consultation with the General Advisory Committee, prescribe, by order, for the school year following, the dates

(a) of the opening and closing of schools; and
(b) on which public examinations will be written.

Section 52. (1) Schools shall not be open for ordinary classes on Saturdays and Sundays: provided, however, that nothing in this subsection shall prevent the holding, on either or both of these days, of classes which may be conducted and attended voluntarily.
(2) Schools shall observe as school holidays all days proclaimed as such by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council.

Section 53. Subject to Section 51, a School Board may approve additional holidays for the schools under its jurisdiction, including, without limitation of the foregoing, holidays at Christmas and Easter.

Section 54. For the purpose of computing salary, a school year shall consist of such number of school days within the period referred to in paragraph (dd) of Section 2 as the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, after consultation with the General Advisory Committee, may by order prescribe.

Sections of The Schools Act (1970) governing the School Day

Section 2(bb). "School Day" means that time in a full day during which school is kept in accordance with this Act and the regulations.

Section 55. In any school the minimum number of hours of instruction in each school day shall be

(a) for kindergarten, two and one-half hours;
(b) for Grades I to III, four hours; and
(c) for Grades IV to XI, five hours.

Section 56. Every teacher shall spend not less than five hours during each school day in the performance of duties that are within the scope of his employment as a teacher, but the school day shall be divided into school sessions of even or uneven duration which shall be separated by an interval of at least one-half hour.

Excerpts from Correspondence with the Chief Superintendent

a) The length of the school year in Newfoundland is 190 days which includes three paid holidays. The operational year is therefore 187 days in length.

b) Traditionally schools begin on the Tuesday following Labour Day. The Minister makes an announcement each year determining the opening date.

c) The Minister announces the closing date of school each year and this date is usually the third Friday in June. (E. [illegible] June 17, 1977).

d) Under the Collective Agreement teachers can be given five school days per year for in-service activities. An additional three days may be given at the direction of the Superintendent and additional leave may be granted with the permission of the Minister.

e) School Boards have the right to close school for any reason deemed necessary by them, e.g., heating problems, health epidemics, and other emergencies.

Prince Edward Island

Under authority of clause (b) of Section 60 of The School Act (20 Eliz. II, Cap. 55) Council did and doth hereby make the following Regulations respecting the days for beginning and ending a school year (School Calendar effective 12 April 1975):

1. For the purposes of this Regulation:
    (a) "school day" means any day on which teachers are expected to be on duty whether in the classroom or at workshops, conventions, or other authorized activities.
    (b) "teaching day" means a day when schools are in normal operation and students are in the classroom.

2. The first school day (Orientation Day) in any school year shall be the Tuesday immediately following Labour Day.

3. The first full teaching day in any school year shall be the day immediately following Orientation Day.

4. The last full teaching day in any calendar year shall be December 23, except when December 23 falls on a Saturday or Sunday, in which case the last full teaching day shall be the Friday immediately preceding December 23.

5. The first full teaching day in any calendar year shall be January 3, except when January 3 falls on a Saturday or Sunday, in which case the first full teaching day shall be the Monday immediately following January 3.

6. A mid-term break of 5 days will be held during the third full week of March. In cases where Good Friday or Easter Monday fall during the third full week of March, the mid-term break will be extended to include the preceding Friday or the following Monday, whichever is applicable.

7. Examinations for senior high school graduating students shall commence no earlier than the Monday of the first full week in June and terminate no earlier than the Friday of the second full week in June.

8. Examinations for all other students shall commence no earlier than the Monday of the second full week in June and terminate no earlier than the Friday of the third full week in June. This shall be the last full teaching day in any school year.

9. The last school day in any year shall not be earlier than four schools days following the last teaching day except when June 1 is a Tuesday in which case the last school day shall be three school days following the last teaching day.

10. Under no circumstances shall school day be held on: (1) Labour Day, (2) Thanksgiving, (3) Remembrance Day, (4) Good Friday, (5) Easter Monday and (6) Victoria Day.

11. A school day (teaching day) shall consist of a minimum of 5 hours (of instruction).

12. Notwithstanding Section 11 above, Regional School Boards may make adjustments in the length of the school day for primary grades (Grades 1-3).

13. Notwithstanding any provisions in this calendar, a Regional School Board may provide, during the school year, for In-Service Training for instructional personnel within the Regional Administrative Unit.

Excerpts from Correspondence with the Director of Educational Planning.

(a) The total number of instructional days varies up to a maximum of 192 days.

(b) The Memorandum of Agreement with the Teachers' Federation grants up to 5 days for professional development activities.

Nova Scotia

Sections of the Education Act of Nova Scotia

Regulations of the Minister of Education

(Pursuant to Section 4 of the Education Act)

School Year, Holidays, Hours of School

1 (1) The school year shall consist of 195 school days.

(2) Every school shall open each year not earlier than the first day of September and not later than the Wednesday following Labour Day, and close not later than the thirtieth day of June.

(3) A school day is any day other than Saturday, Sunday or a statutory holiday which is within the school year.

(4) The Christmas vacation shall commence not earlier than and not later than dates fixed in each school year by the Minister and shall consist of Christmas Day and New Year's Day and not fewer than five or more than ten school days.

(5) The spring vacation shall consist of five consecutive school days in March on dates determined by the Minister.

(6) School holidays include Labour Day, Thanksgiving Day, Remembrance Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Victoria Day and the day fixed by proclamation for observance of the birthday of the reigning sovereign.

2 (1) Except as otherwise provided in this regulation there shall be five hours of teaching in each classroom on each school day. Hours of teaching shall mean time during which pupils are under instruction or otherwise under control or supervision by the teacher and shall not include time spent by the teacher in marking tests or examination papers, for grading and classifying pupils, when no pupils are present or under her control.

(2) A school board may direct that not fewer than three hours of teaching shall be provided on each school day:

(a) in classes for children in the Primary Grade or Grades 1 or 2;

(b) for each class where two classes are taught at different periods on the same day in one school room.

(3) A school board may direct that not more than six hours of teaching shall be provided on each school day in any classroom.

(4) A school board may direct:

(a) that a recess of not more than fifteen minutes shall be allowed for any class or classes on each school day;

(b) that no recess shall be allowed for any high school class or classes.

(5) Where a municipal school board, a board of school commissioners or a regional school board is of the opinion that it is necessary for the health and safety of pupils in a school that a class or classes of pupils be dismissed, the board may dismiss some or all of the classes in the school.

(6) A municipal school board, a board of school commissioners or a regional school board may delegate to a supervisory officer named in Regulation 12 of the Regulations made by the Governor in Council, to a local board of trustees or to a district board of trustees authority to dismiss some or all of the classes in a school if the supervisory officer, the local board of trustees or the district board of trustees is of the opinion that it is necessary for the health and safety of pupils in the school that a class or classes of pupils should be dismissed.

(7) Where a class has been dismissed pursuant to subsection (5) or (6) after school has been in session for three hours or more on any day that day shall be deemed to be a school day of the class for the purposes of the Act and the Regulations.

(8) Where a class has been dismissed pursuant to subsection (5) or (6) before school has been in session for three hours on any day that day shall be deemed not to be a school day of the class for the purposes of the Act and the Regulations.

(9) With the approval of the Minister, a school board may order that a school be closed on a school day.

3 (1) Except as otherwise provided in these regulations, Saturday shall not be regarded as a school day for the purpose of the payment of provincial grants.

(2) When a classroom has not been operated on a school day and the teacher cannot claim the day as a school day under the provisions of Regulation 28, with the approval of the Inspector school may be taught on any of the following days not regularly included in the school year:

(a) the school days of the spring vacation;

(b) not more than three Saturdays during a school year.

but no classroom may be in operation for more than 195 days in a school year, and no teacher may teach or claim credit for more than 195 days in a school year.

New Brunswick

The province of New Brunswick entered into a two-year experimental school calendar commencing with the school year 1976-77, thereby making redundant the relevant sections of the School Act that pertain to the school year and school day. Hence, the policy statements reported in this subsection were extracted from a memorandum, dated February 17, 1976 from the Honourable Gerald S. Merrithew, Minister of Education, to Boards of Trustees, District Superintendents and others, and from relevant Articles of the Province's Collective Agreement Act.

Articles of the Collective Agreement Act

Article 16. Length of the School Year.

16.01 The school year shall begin on the first day of July and end on the thirtieth day of June.

16.02 The total number of teaching days in a school year shall not exceed one hundred and ninety-five (195). All weekdays not allowed as statutory holidays or not included in vacation shall be teaching days. The total number of one hundred and ninety-five teaching days shall include if applicable:

(a) days during which the school in which the teacher is employed was closed due to inclement weather;

(b) holidays proclaimed by the Governor-General or by the Lieutenant-Governor;

(c) days during which the school was closed by the Employer;

(d) days during which the school was closed by Medical Health authorities; and

(e) days lost by a teacher for illness, compassionate leave, professional improvement, approved meetings, and any other approved absences for which the teacher has not lost salary.

Article 17. Holidays.

17.01 Statutory holidays will be taken on the days proclaimed.

Article 18. Hours of Instruction.

18.01 The number of hours of instruction exclusive of the noon recess shall be for the first two years of the elementary school a minimum of four and a maximum of four and one-half; for the remaining years of the elementary school and for the intermediate or junior high school, a minimum of five and a maximum of five and one-half; and for the senior high school a minimum of five and one-half and a maximum of six.

Sections from The School Act.

Section 9 There shall be in all schools, except herein provided,

(a) a summer vacation beginning on the first day of July and ending the Saturday preceding Labour Day;

(b) a winter vacation of two weeks, beginning on the Saturday preceding the week in which Christmas falls; and

(c) a spring vacation of one week, beginning on the Saturday preceding the third Monday in the month of March.

Excerpts from a Memorandum from the Minister of Education.

Although the committee recommended 195 days for teachers and 182 days for students providing a differential of 13 days, the maximum number of teacher days will not exceed 193 for the school year 1976-77.

The 13 days will be allotted as follows:

1. 3 Provincial Days

The three days will be specified by the Minister of Education upon the advice of the Professional Development Board, the NBTA and the AEFNB. Schools across the province will be closed on these days. NBTA and AEFNB have agreed to conduct all Subject Council workshops during these days.

2. 10 District Days

The ten district days will be allotted by the Board of Trustees upon recommendation from the District Inservice Committee. The following days must be included in the ten:

-NBTA/AEFNB half day meetings
-NBTA/AEFNB professional development workshop
-the 3 days at the end of the school year usually granted by the Minister continue to be available for administrative purposes.
-the remaining 5 days should be used for curriculum development, parent/teacher meetings and other professional activities. The majority of the 5 days should be utilized at a school or individual level rather than at district workshops.

The Collective Agreement between Treasury Board and the BNTF guarantees certain specific days to teachers which are over and above the 13 days specified in the Revised School Calendar. These days are as follows:

- 1 day per year for the purpose of receiving a degree or diploma.
- up to 3 days for NBTF, NBTA and AEFNB committees
- up to 5 days for NBTF, NBTA and AEFNB Boards of Directors
- up to 10 days for NBTF, NBTA and AEFNB Executive Committees
- Days at the Discretion of the Boards: up to 3 days to participate in professional workshops and meetings; and additional leave for any reason deemed valid by the Board.

Quebec

Sections of Regulation 7 of the Department of Education as Amended February 25, 1977.

Section 5 Kindergarten and Elementary Level.

The pupil's school calendar shall include a maximum of 200 days between the first of September and the thirtieth of June, of which at least 180 days must be devoted to the courses and activities specified in Section 10 [Author's Note: Section 10 describes the instructional and evaluative activities that comprise the typical instructional year for kindergarten and elementary students.]

Section 8 Kindergarten.

The kindergarten pupil shall have 690 minutes of activities during a week of five school days (2 1/3 hours per day) including recreation and dressing activities.

Section 9 Elementary Level.

The pupil of the elementary level shall have 1380 minutes of activities as defined in Section 10 during a week of five school days (4.6 hours per day).

Section 28 Secondary.

The pupil's school calendar shall include a maximum of 200 days between the first of September and the thirtieth of June, of which at least 180 days must be devoted to the courses and activities specified in Section 32 [Author's Note: Section 32 describes the instructional and evaluative activities that comprise the typical instructional year for secondary students.]

Section 31 Secondary.

During a week of five school days, the pupil of the secondary level shall have 1500 minutes of courses and in as much as the programs of the Minister permit student activities (5 hours per day).

Excerpt from Correspondence with the Centrale de L'Enseignement du Quebec.

In correspondence, dated March 21, 1977, it was reported a new proposal for the 1977-78 will be in effect. It was noted that "The Minister wishes to establish the 1977-78 school calendar in terms of instructional time. The number of minutes at the elementary level will be 52,000 and at the secondary level 54,000 for the year 1977-78."

Ontario

Sections of Ontario Regulation 546/73 under The Ministry of Education Act, 1973.

Section 1.-(1) In this regulation,

(a) "instructional day" means a school day that is designated as an instructional day on a school calendar and upon which day an instructional program that may include examinations is provided for each pupil whose program is governed by such calendar;

(b) "professional activity" includes evaluation of the progress of pupils, consultation with parents, the counselling of pupils, curriculum and program evaluation and development, professional development of teachers and attending educational conferences;

(c) "professional activity day" means a school day that is designated as a day for professional activities on a school calendar;

(d) "school day" means a day that is within a school year and is not a school holiday; and

(e) "school year" means the period prescribed as such by or approved as such under this Regulation.

(2) A board may designate half a school day an instructional program and the remainder of the day for professional activities, but such a day constitutes a half-day in determining the number of instructional days in the school year.

2.-(1) Subject to Section 4, the school year shall commence on the day following Labour Day and end on the 30th day of June but, when the 30th day of June is a Monday or Tuesday, the school year shall end on the preceding Friday.

(2) Subject to Section 4, a school year shall include at least 185 instructional days, and the remaining school days shall be professional activity days.

(3) Subject to Section 4, the following are school holidays:

1. Every Saturday and Sunday.
2. A day appointed by the Governor General or the Lieutenant Governor as a public holiday or for Thanksgiving.
3. Where the school is open during July and August, Dominion Day and Labour Day.
4. Good Friday.
5. Victoria Day.
6. A Christmas vacation to begin on the 23rd day of December or, when the 23rd day of December is a Tuesday, on the 22nd day of December and to end on the 2nd day of January or, when the 2nd day of January is a Thursday, on the 3rd day of January.
7. Five consecutive days commencing on the Monday next following the Friday preceding the 21st day of March, or five consecutive days, exclusive of Saturday and Sunday, that are within the period from the first school day in January to the last school day in June, and are designated as school holidays in lieu thereof by the board that operates the school.
8. Easter Monday or a day designated as a school holiday in lieu thereof by the board that operates the school.
9. Where Remembrance Day is not Saturday or Sunday, Remembrance Day or a day designated as a school holiday in lieu thereof by the board that operates the school.

3. In the year 1973 a board may, and in the year 1974 and each subsequent year every board shall, except in respect of a school or class for which the board has

submitted a proposed school calendar under Section 4, prepare, adopt and submit to the Minister on or before the 1st day of May, in respect of the school year next following, the school calendar or school calendars to be followed in the schools under its jurisdiction, and each such school calendar shall,

(a) state the school or schools in which the calendar is to be followed;

(b) conform to Section 2; and

(c) identify each day of the school year as an instructional day, a professional activity day or a school holiday.

4.-(1) For one or more schools under its jurisdiction a board may designate a school year and school holidays that are different from those prescribed in Section 2 and, where a board does so, the board shall submit to the Minister on or before the 1st day of March a proposed school calendar for the school year next following in respect of such school or schools, identifying thereon each day of the school year as an instructional day, a professional activity day or a school holiday, and the board may, upon approval thereof by the Minister, implement such school calendar.

(2) Where the Minister informs a board that he does not approve the school calendar submitted under subsection (1), the board may amend its proposed school calendar and submit to the Minister a revised school calendar and, upon approval thereof by the Minister, the board may implement the revised school calendar.

(3) Where a board has submitted a proposed school calendar under subsection (1) and the Minister has not approved on or before the 15th day of April such calendar or a revision thereof submitted under subsection (2), the board shall, on or before the 1st day of May, prepare, adopt and submit to the Minister a school calendar in accordance with Section 3.

5.-(1) Where, in the opinion of the board, it is desirable to alter a school calendar that has been submitted under Section 3 or subsection (3) of Section 4 or approved and implemented under subsection (1) or (2) of Section 4, the board may, with the prior approval of the Minister, alter the school calendar.

(2) Where,

(a) a school or class is closed for a temporary period because of failure of transportation arrangements, inclement weather, fire, flood, a breakdown of the school heating plant or a similar emergency, or a school is closed under The Emergency Measures Act, The Public Health Act, The Ministry of Education Act or subsection 2 of Section 4 of The Schools Administration Act; and

(b) the school calendar is not altered under subsection (1),

the day on which the school or class is closed remains an instructional day or a professional activity day, as the case may be, as designated on the school calendar applicable to such school or class.

6. Nothing in this Regulation shall operate to prevent the holding of a meaningful and significant program in observance of Remembrance Day.

Sections of Ontario Regulation 191, as Amended, under The Ministry of Education Act 1971.

Section 3.-(1) The number of hours of instruction shall not be fewer than five in each day.

(2) Notwithstanding subsection (1), the board may reduce the school day to a minimum of 2½ hours for pupils in Kindergarten and Grade One.

Manitoba

Sections from Revised Regulation P250-R13, Amended by 114/75, under The Public Schools Act.

Section 1. Unless the Minister gives specific written approval of other arrangements, the instructional day shall be not less than five and one-half hours including recesses but excluding the midday intermission.

Section 2. Subject to Section 1, any board of school trustees may, by resolution duly recorded in its minutes, determine the hours of opening and closing, as well as the time and duration of the midday intermission.

Section 4. The following shall be the vacations for schools:

(a) Spring - the week beginning with the last Monday in March.

(b) Midsummer - those days from the last day of the spring term to the first day of the fall term of the school year as provided in Section 9.

(c) Christmas - those days from the last day of the fall term to the first day of the spring term of the school year as provided in Section 9.

Section 5. (1) The following are holidays in all schools:

- (a) Good Friday
- (b) Victoria Day
- (c) Labour Day
- (d) Thanksgiving Day
- (e) Remembrance Day
- (f) Any other day designated by the Minister; but any day so designated counts as a teaching day for the purpose of computing grants.

(2) Where, in any year, Good Friday falls during the spring vacation, the first Monday immediately following Good Friday is a school holiday.

Section 6. Each year the Minister shall designate the teaching days to be counted for the purpose of computing grants for the calendar year.

Section 7. Where a school district, school area, or school division has a deficiency of teaching days in the spring term, it may make up this deficiency as provided in sub-clause (1) of clause (a) of Section 9.

Section 9. The school year shall be divided into two terms as follows:

(a) The fall term is from and including the Tuesday after Labour Day (that day to be a full teaching day) to and including the twenty-third day of December; but (i) a school district, school area, or school division with a deficiency from the spring term may open before the Tuesday after Labour Day, but not earlier than a date sufficient to make up the deficiency; and (ii) when the twenty-third of December is a Monday the fall term shall end on and include Friday, the Twentieth day of December.

(b) The spring term is from and including the third day of January to and including the thirtieth day of June; but (i) when the third day of January is a Friday, the spring term shall commence on, and include, Monday the sixth day of January; and (ii) when the thirtieth day of June is a Monday, the spring term shall end on and include, Friday, the twenty-seventh day of June.

Section 10. In each calendar year the number of days for teacher in-service, parent-teacher conferences, administration, and pupil evaluation shall not exceed eleven days in Grades Kindergarten through Twelve.

Section 11. (1) The days set out in Section 10 shall be approved by the inspector of schools.

(2) For those days set out as provided in Section 10, individual pupil attendance need not be recorded in the classroom register; and each day shall be marked according to the purpose for which it was used.

(3) Those days set out as provided in Section 10 shall be counted as teaching days for the purpose of computing grants.

To bring some uniformity to the time requirements under the credit pattern, senior high time allotments are set at 110-120 hours of instruction per credit course. Thus a student is required to receive 20 x 120 hours or 2400 hours of instruction time to earn his high school diploma. Teachers, however, have no set instructional time commitments. Semestering and trimestering have greatly affected teaching patterns to the extent that a teacher may teach full time during one term but teach only 1/3 time during the next part of the semester or trimester period.

Saskatchewan

Extracts from Correspondence with Mr. Ian J. Wilson, Deputy Minister of Education [3-2-77]

1. Under the provisions of Section 215 of The School Act with respect to the number of teaching days in the academic year

1977-78, the Minister of Education announces that the number of such days shall be at least 200.

2. For the 1977-78 school year, the following schedule is a suggestion to school boards because the way in which the 200 days are included in the school year is a board decision.

   (a) opening date -- September 1
   (b) closing date -- June 30
   (c) Christmas break -- December 23 to January 2
   (d) Spring break -- March 27 to 31.

3. Conventions and institutes, field trips, etc. may take a total of eight days (The School Act, clause (b) of subsection (5) of Section 232).

4. Any day proclaimed as a holiday by the Governor-General, the Lieutenant Governor, the mayor or the reeve, or any one day declared by a board, shall be a holiday.

5. The school is to be conducted from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00, and from 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., with two 15-minute recesses; but this may be modified by not more than one half hour by the board, or by more than half an hour with the Minister's consent.

6. A board may operate any of its schools under such organizational plans with respect to the length of the school day and week, school terms, holidays and vacation periods as may be approved by the Minister.

British Columbia

Public Schools Act Regulations, 1975

(Numbers in Brackets [ ] refer to sections of The Act.)

13. [18(2)] (1) On at least one day before the commencement of classroom instruction in September, and on at least four other occasions during the school year, meetings of the principal and teachers shall be held for the purpose of considering matters affecting the appropriate organization, management, and effective functioning of the school.

(2) A record shall be kept of the proceedings of each meeting and shall be open to inspection by the Department and the Board of the school district.

16. [18-3] The school year shall begin on the 1st day of July and end on the following 30th day of June.

17. [18-3] (i) A calendar of the school year shall be prepared annually and issued by the Minister.
(ii) The calendar shall state the opening and closing date for public schools, the statutory and school holidays, and the number of days schools shall be in session for teachers and pupils.

18. [18-3] In addition to regular holidays, any school day may be proclaimed a holiday by the Minister.

19. [18-3] The Board of a school district shall not, except as ordered by the School Medical Officer appointed under the Act, or by reason of weather or other causes that might endanger the health of the pupils, close any school without the permission of the Minister.

20. [18-3] In elementary schools the school day for instructional purposes shall not exceed five hours and 30 minutes, inclusive of 15 minutes for recess in the forenoon, and the total hours in the school day in any calendar week shall be 25.

20.A.[18-3] Notwithstanding the provisions of Regulation 20, a Board may, by resolution, authorize the dismissal of pupils in Grades I and II in any school one-half hour prior to the hour of dismissal established for that school.

21. [18-3] In secondary schools the school day for instructional purposes shall not exceed six hours, and the total hours in the school days in any calendar week shall be not less than 27½ or more than 30.

22. [18-3] Except where special permission has been obtained from the Department, no elementary school shall commence instruction before 8:30 a.m., or continue it after 3:30 p.m.

23. [18-3] Except where special permission has been obtained from the Department, no secondary school shall commence instruction before 8:00 a.m., or continue it after 5:00 p.m.

24. [18-3] The Board of a school district shall determine the time and duration of the noon intermission.

25. [18-3] Every pupil shall be allowed full time for recess and noon intermission, and shall not be detained more than 30 minutes outside regular school hours in any one day.

88. [152] On any day of the school year, excepting holidays, every teacher may be expected by either the Board

or the Department to be on duty for special purposes for reasonable periods beyond the prescribed hours for instruction.

92. [152] No teacher shall be required to offer instruction for more than five hours and 15 minutes daily.

Extracts from Administrative Services Circular, Department of Education, No. 28, 1.2.77.

(a) The total number of prescribed school days for the school year 1977-78 shall be 197.

(b) The minimum in-session requirements (for the year 1977-78) shall be: Teachers 197, pupils 191.

(c) Pupils in all schools shall be excused from attendance on June 30, 1978 and this day shall be considered as a day in-session for teachers only.

(d) If pupils are excused from attendance on either the morning or the afternoon of September 6th, 1977, or both, then that session or day shall be considered as either 1/2 or 1 day in-session for the teachers only.

B.C.Teachers' Federation Policy Statements Re School Day and Year.

(Policy statements are statements the B.C.T.F. wishes to attain or retain.)

23.E.01 (a) Maximum compulsory attendance by students and regular classroom teachers should not exceed 25 hours per calendar week.

(b) A regular classroom teacher should not be required to offer more than 20 hours of instruction per calendar week.

(c) The number of compulsory attendance days per week should not exceed five.

(d) The number of compulsory attendance days per school year for students and teachers should not exceed 190 days.

(e) There should be one week per month with only four compulsory attendance days.

(f) The Christmas vacation period should begin at least four days prior to Christmas and should be at least two weeks' duration.

(g) A 10-day vacation period should be provided during the month of March or April.

(h) The afternoon session of kindergarten should be of two hours' duration.

(i) No student should be required to be absent from his/her home for more than eight hours a day as a result of the school timetable, shifts, extended days or bus schedules.

(j) The Ministry of Education should provide more time for elementary teachers to conclude year-end administrative procedures and to prepare for next year.

(k) Each school district should be allowed to hold a track meet on an instructional day.

23.E.03 That under Regulation 17 of the Public Schools Act Regulations, when November 11 falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the Monday following November 11 should be declared a statutory holiday.

23.E.05 That at least one afternoon per reporting period be set aside in elementary schools to allow for parent interview and/or evaluation time, determination of how the time shall be spent to be decided by the staff of each school.

Yukon

Sections Extracted from the School Ordinance.

Section 107 (1) The following days shall be school holidays:

(a) every Saturday
(b) every Sunday
(c) New Year's Day
(d) Good Friday
(e) Easter Monday
(f) Victoria Day (Queen's Birthday)
(g) Discovery Day
(h) Labour Day
(i) Thanksgiving Day
(j) Remembrance Day
(k) Christmas Day
(l) Any day proclaimed a holiday by the Governor-General or the Commissioner.

(2) Instruction in a school year shall commence on the date fixed in Schedule VI to this Ordinance. [September 1, in 1976]

(3) There shall be a spring vacation consisting of five consecutive days, inclusive of any holiday pursuant to subsection (1), commencing on the Monday of the third full week in March.

(4) There shall be a Christmas vacation, inclusive of any holiday pursuant to subsection (1), which shall commence and end on the dates fixed

in Schedule VI to this Ordinance. [December 23, 1976 through January 3, 1977]

(5) Instruction shall terminate in a school year on the date fixed by the Commissioner pursuant to Section 109. [June 20, in 1977]

Section 108 (1) There shall be 190 school days in a school year.

(2) One hundred and eighty-seven school days shall be instructional days during which days all pupils shall attend school for instruction.

(3) The principal of each school shall, on the advice of the Board or the school committee, determine the disposition of the three non-instructional school days.

(4) Where no school committee exists in respect of a Territorial School, the principal, with the approval of the Regional Superintendent, shall determine the disposition of the three non-instructional school days.

Section 109 (1) The Commissioner shall on or before May 1 in each year issue a school calendar setting forth, in respect of the ensuing school year:

(a) the date of commencement of instruction in the school year, as determined pursuant to Schedule VI;

(b) the dates of the spring vacation and Christmas vacation, as determined pursuant to Schedule VI;

(c) the number of school days and holidays other than Saturdays and Sundays in each month in the school year; and any additional information which is required for the purpose of this Ordinance.

Section 110 (1) In elementary schools, the school day for instructional purposes shall comprise five hours of instructional time, exclusive of any recesses or intermissions.

(2) Notwithstanding subsection (1), a principal may with the approval of the school committee or, where there is no school committee, the Regional Superintendent, reduce the instructional time for pupils in Grade I to 4½ hours each school day.

Section 111 (1) In secondary schools, the school day for instructional purposes shall comprise five hours of instructional time, exclusive of any recesses or intermissions.

Section 112 (1) A principal shall, in consultation with the school committee or, where there is no school committee, the Regional Superintendent, determine the hours of pupil attendance and the duration of any recesses or intermissions.

SUMMARY

The extent to which the provincial Ministers of Education prescribe matters related to the school year and school day varies considerably across the provinces of Canada. Certain provincial departments, notably Alberta, permit school boards a great deal of flexibility in determining the school opening and closing dates, the length and time of the Christmas, Spring/Easter, and summer vacations, specific holidays, the length of the teaching and student year, and the length of the students' instructional day. Other provincial departments, however, have developed through regulations and specific sections in School Acts firm, explicit policy covering these items. Although certain conclusions may be drawn from the review of literature on the subject, only a summary of the provincial school calendars is included below. Recommendations arising out of this cross-Canada review of the literature are included in Chapter 6 of this report.

Table 2.01, reprinted from The School Calendar, 1976-77, with the kind permission of the Canadian Education, presents a summary of each of the provincial school calendars for the school year 1976-77. Further, the information reported in the following brief summary includes information derived from the above noted

Table 2.01

OPENING AND CLOSING DATES IN 1976-77

*Some provincial departments allow school boards considerable freedom in setting opening and closing dates. For this reason, information on a number of large cities is included in the table. Please also refer to the notes following the table.**

PROVINCE	FALL TERM OPENING	CHRISTMAS CLOSING	SPRING TERM OPENING	SPRING MID-TERM CLOSING	SPRING MID-TERM RE-OPENING	SUMMER CLOSING
B.C.	Sep. 7	Dec. 17	Jan. 3	Mar. 25	Apr. 4	Jun. 29-pupils; Jun. 30-tchrs.
ALTA.	Varies from Aug. 30 to Sep. 7	Varies from Dec. 17 to Dec. 22	Jan. 3 in most cases	Varies from Mar. 25 to Apr. 7	Varies from Apr. 4 to Apr. 18	Varies from Jun. 24 to Jun. 30
Calgary	*Sep. 1*	*Dec. 22*	*Jan. 3*	*Mar. 25*	*Apr. 4*	*Jun. 30*
Edmonton	*Sep. 7*	*Dec. 23*	*Jan. 3*	*Mar. 25*	*Apr. 4*	*Jun. 30*
SASK.	Sep. 1	Dec. 22	Jan. 3	Apr. 7	Apr. 18	Jun. 30
Regina	*Sep. 1-tchrs.;* *Sep. 7-pupils*	*Dec. 22*	*Jan. 3*	*Apr. 7*	*Apr. 18*	*Jun. 30*
Saskatoon	*Aug. 26-tchrs.;* *Aug. 30-pupils*	*Dec. 17*	*Jan. 3*	*Apr. 7*	*Apr. 18*	*Jun. 30*
MAN.	Sep. 7	Dec. 23	Jan. 3	Mar. 25	Apr. 4	Jun. 30
ONT.	Sep. 7	Dec. 22	Jan. 3	---Board decision---		Jun. 30
Ottawa	*Sep. 7*	*Dec. 22*	*Jan. 3*	*Mar. 11*	*Mar. 21*	*Jun. 30*
Toronto	*Sep. 7*	*Dec. 22*	*Jan. 3*	*Mar. 18*	*Mar. 28*	*Jun. 30*
QUE.	Board decision	Dec. 23	Board decision	Apr. 7	Apr. 12	Jun. 23-pupils; Jun. 30-tchrs.
Montreal & Quebec	*Sep. 1-tchrs.;* *Sep. 8-pupils*	*Dec. 23*	*Jan. 10*	*Apr. 7*	*Apr. 12-tchrs.;* *Apr. 13-pupils*	*Jun. 23-pupils;* *Jun. 30-tchrs.*
N.B.	Sep. 7	Dec. 17	Jan. 4	Mar. 18	Mar. 28	Jun. 30
Saint John	*Sep. 7-tchrs.;* *Sep. 8-pupils*	*Dec. 17*	*Jan. 4*	*Mar. 18*	*Mar. 28*	*Jun. 27-pupils;* *Jun. 30-tchrs.*
N.S.	No earlier than Sep. 1, no later than Sep. 8	No earlier than Dec. 17, no later than Dec. 22	No later than Jan. 4	Mar. 11	Mar. 21	No later than Jun. 30
Halifax	*Sep. 2-tchrs.;* *Sep. 7-pupils*	*Dec. 17*	*Jan. 3*	*Mar. 11*	*Mar. 21*	*Jun. 30*
P.E.I.	Sep. 7-tchrs.; Sep. 8-pupils	Dec. 23	Jan. 3	Mar. 18	Mar. 28	Jun. 24-pupils; Jun. 30-tchrs.
NFLD.	Sep. 1	---Board decision--- (Dec. 22)	(Jan. 4)	(Apr. 7)	(Apr. 18)	Jun. 17
St. John's	*Sep. 1*	*Dec. 22*	*Jan. 5*	*Apr. 7*	*Apr. 18*	*Jun. 17*

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*The reference to notes preceding Table 2.01 refers to the original CEA publication and not to the text of this report.

monograph.

British Columbia

The school calendar and school day are legislated under Regulations 13, 16-25, and 56 of the Public Schools Act Regulations. For the school year 1976-77 the number of minimum in-session days was 193 for teachers and 187 for students. B.C. schools close for a uniform spring break, generally during the third full week in March.

In elementary schools the school day for instructional purposes is 5 1/4 hours or less and in secondary schools is 6 hours or less. The total hours in the school-days in any calendar week are 25 for elementary and between 27½ and 30 for secondary schools.

Alberta

There is no official calendar for the province; each school board sets its own opening and closing dates. Some school boards provide an Easter vacation, others provide a spring break, both about one week in duration. Under the School Act, unless a teacher agrees, a board may not require a teacher to instruct students for less than 190 days or more than 200 days in a school year. The length of the instructional day for students is not defined.

Saskatchewan

For the 1976-77 school year schools were required to be kept open for 200 days but the way in which the 200 days was included in the school year was left to individual school boards. Under The School Act conventions, institutes, field meets, etc., may take a total of eight days in any school year.

The school day is 5½ hours in length with two 15-minute recesses, but this may be modified by not more than one half hour by the board, or by more than half an hour with the Minister's consent.

Manitoba

The number of teaching days that may be counted for computing grants is designated annually by the Minister. Typically, this number lies between 196 and 200, depending upon the June and September calendar. For the 1976-77 school year there were 198 such days. In each calendar year the number of days for teacher in-service, parent-teacher conferences, administration, and pupil evaluation may not exceed eleven days.

Unless the Minister gives specific written approval of other arrangements, the instructional day is not less than 5½ hours including recesses but excluding the midday intermission.

Ontario

Under Ontario legislation each school board may determine the school calendar providing that a school year shall include at least 185 instructional days. In addition, school boards may allot up to a maximum of 12 days for the use of teachers as "professional days." Most school boards provide a spring break of at least five consecutive school days.

The School Act requires that the number of hours of instruction shall not be fewer than five in each school day.

Quebec

Quebec legislation requires that the school year must include at most 200 school days between September 1 and June 30, of which at least 180 days must be devoted to instruction. The remaining 20 days are for teacher professional days determined by the school board after consultation with the teacher unions.

The length of the school day for elementary students is 276 minutes or 1380 minutes per week and 300 minutes or 1500 minutes per week for secondary students.

New Brunswick

New Brunswick implemented a new school calendar commencing during the 1976-77 school year. It provided for a maximum of 193 teacher days and 180 days for students. The 13-day difference provided for 3 provincial days to be specified by the Minister and 10 district days allotted by individual school boards.

The length of the school day is specified by Collective Agreement and varies between 4 and 4½ hours for Grades I and II; between 5 and 5½ hours for other elementary grades and junior high school students; and between 5½ and 6 hours for senior high school students.

Nova Scotia

Under Nova Scotia legislation the school year consists of 195 teaching days. Each teacher may use and claim as equivalent to teaching days up to four days, with the consent of the School Board, for certified participation in in-service training programs requested or approved by the Minister; and not more than one day, with the approval of the Board for other professional activities.

By regulation, the Christmas vacation shall consist of Christmas Day, New Year's Day, and not fewer than five nor more than ten school days. During the 1976-77 school year the spring vacation was from March 11 to March 21.

School Boards are directed under provincial regulation that not fewer than three hours of teaching shall be provided on each school day in classes for children in the Primary Grade or Grades I or II and that not more than six hours of teaching shall be provided on each school day in any classroom.

Prince Edward Island

The school calendar for P.E.I. is legislated under The School Act Calendar Regulations, 1975. The first school day (Orientation Day) occurs on the Tuesday immediately following Labour Day and the first teaching day is the day immediately following Orientation Day. The last full teaching day is the Friday of the third full week in June and the last school day occurs not less than four days following. For the 1976-77 school year opening dates were September 7 for teachers and September 8 for pupils; closing dates were June 24 for pupils and June 30 for teachers.

A Memorandum of Agreement with the Teachers' Federation grants up to five days for professional development activities. The total number of instructional days varies across the province up to a maximum of 192 days.

By regulation, a teaching day consists of a minimum of five hours of instruction.

Newfoundland

Opening and closing dates for Newfoundland schools are prescribed by the Minister. For the 1976-77 school year these dates were September 1 and June 17 respectively. The length of the school year is 190 days which includes three paid holidays. This means that schools are required to operate 187 days per year.

The length of the Christmas and Easter break is at the discretion of the individual school boards throughout the province. Most school boards close school around December 22nd and open sometime during the first week of the New Year. During Easter most schools close on the Thursday preceding Good Friday and open at varying dates during the latter part of the following week. Some Boards declare a mid-term break during March of one or two days and this, in turn, affects the length of the Christmas or Easter break.

Under the Collective Agreement teachers can be given five school days per year for in-service activities. An additional three days may be given at the direction of the Superintendent.

In any school the minimum number of hours of instruction in each school day shall be, by regulation: for Kindergarten, 2½ hours; for Grades I to III, 4 hours; and for Grades IV to XI, five hours.

FUTURE MODIFICATION OF PROVINCIAL SCHOOL CALENDARS

In his School Year Modification Study, 1971, Dr. Melvin R. Fenske expressed a desire for some possible elaboration on the 180-day instructional school year and suggested three plans for consideration: (a) the divided school year using Christmas as the break; (b) the modified quarter system; and (c) the continuous progress plan [Fenske, pp. 24-25].

Part of the focus of this present study was to determine, if at all possible, the extent that the provincial departments of education appear to be moving away from what has been called the traditional school year toward some modification of the school year.

No such trend was discernible either in the official literature supplied by individual provincial departments of education, teachers' federations/associations, and trustees' associations, or in the personal correspondence received from senior officials of these three types of organization. A review of this literature revealed, if anything, a national desire to stay with the traditional school year. In addition to Fenske's report to the Government of Alberta, only two other provincial reports were located. These are described in the following section.

In the autumn of 1969, the Provincial Executive of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation appointed a committee to examine the extension and/or rescheduling of the school year. The report of this committee, 245 days, examines the issue in detail and concludes "the Committee does not see any major reorganization of the school year as economically feasible or socially acceptable at this time in this province [Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation, p. 47]."

In similar vein, the Task Force on School Year established by the Province of New Brunswick reported February 28, 1977: "The Task Force is not recommending major or drastic changes in the School Year such as the operation of schools on a twelve month basis; we concluded that such a system would be neither practical nor acceptable in this Province. We recommend that no changes be made in the school year for 1977-78 [Government of New Brunswick, Letter of Transmittal]." The specific recommendations of this Task Force were:

Recommendation 1: That the school year consist of 195 days

Recommendation 2: That the school year begin on the last Monday in August and continue for 195 days.

Recommendation 3: That the Christmas break begin on December 23rd and end on New Year's Day. (However, when the 23rd falls on a Saturday or Sunday the break begins on the Friday preceding the 23rd. When New Year's Day falls on a Saturday or Sunday, schools will re-open on Tuesday following January 1st.

Recommendation 4: That the one-week March break begin on the first Monday in March.

Recommendation 5: That of the 195 days, 13 days be available for professional development activities and administrative purposes.

Recommendation 6: That whenever possible the 13 days be scheduled immediately prior to or following holidays or holiday periods except where otherwise precribed by Collective Agreements.

Recommendation 7: That there be not less than 182 regularly scheduled student days in each school year.

Recommendation 8: That boards of school trustees make every effort to ensure that students are actively and productively engaged in the learning process for the entire school year. Such efforts might include a closer control over times of examinations and graduation exercises.

Recommendation 9: That the Department of Education continue to regulate the opening and closing dates and the dates of the Christmas and Mid-term breaks.

Recommendation 10: That the Minister of Education upon the recommendation of N.B.T.A. and A.E.F.N.B. continue to specify the dates of the three provincial days for subject council workshops.

Recommendation 11: That each school district develop a school calendar based on the provincial dates.

Recommendation 12: That individual copies of the district school calendar be sent to parents not later than the opening day of school of each school year [Government of New Brunswick, pp. 43-45].

Chapter 3

SCHOOL REPORTS ON SCHOOL YEAR AND SCHOOL DAY FOR THE 1969-70 AND 1975-76 SCHOOL YEARS

This chapter reports the findings of the survey of Alberta principals on factors concerning actual practices in the schools during two school years, 1969-70 and 1975-76. The questionnaire was developed in three forms for the use of elementary, junior high, and senior high school principals, respectively. It was designed to provide data about the opening and closing dates of the school year, the length and scheduling of the vacations and holidays during the school year, the length of the instructional year for students, and the length of the instructional day as practised in Alberta schools prior to the new School Act of 1970 and subsequent to that Act, that is, during the school year 1969-70 and during the school year 1975-76.

A mailing list from the Department of Education provided the names and addresses of the 1314 Alberta school principals in both the public and separate systems, all of whom were asked to complete the questionnaire for both school years, 1969-70 and 1975-76. Principals of multi-level schools were asked to complete a questionnaire for each level over which they held responsibility. This characteristic of the survey was valuable in drawing upon the maximum number of possible respondents. On the other hand, the sample was not constructed nor the analysis of data conducted with a view to deriving statistical generalizations. The following pages, therefore, focus upon describing the actual practices associated with the school year and school day as reported by the survey respondents.

Table 3.01 shows the number of questionnaires returned by school zone, school level and school year.

Table 3.01

Questionnaire Returns by School Zone, School Level, and School Year

	School Level					
	Elementary		Junior High		Senior High	
School Zone	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76
1 Peace River	38	50	32	39	13	13
2 Edmonton North	52	61	38	41	21	21
3 Edmonton South	44	51	34	37	18	17
4 Central Alberta	46	50	32	36	15	15
5 Calgary Area	36	45	31	36	20	22
6 Southern Alberta	63	71	40	48	18	19
7 Edmonton Public	3	8	2	7	3	3
8 Calgary and Edmonton Separate	19	26	5	7	5	7
9 Calgary Public	52	70	20	30	7	10
Totals by School Level	353	432	234	281	120	127

THE SCHOOL YEARS, 1969-70 AND 1975-76

In the first part of the questionnaire respondents were supplied with the following facts concerning each of the two years in question: (a) the number of days in the calendar year; (b) the number of Saturdays and Sundays; (c) the number of specified holidays, including the Christmas vacation and statutory holidays; and (d) the number of "possible" school days, viz. 247 for 1969-70 and

248 for 1975-76.

The second part of the questionnaire presented a list of eleven possible categories together with a description of each category. This list included: (i) summer vacation days, exclusive of weekends; (ii) Easter/spring vacation days; (iii) Board declared holidays; (iv) emergency days; (v) work stoppage days; (vi) convention days; (vii) professional or institute days; (viii) organization/ administration days; (ix) parent interview days; (x) examination days; and (xi) unknown days. For each school level and for each category, respondents were asked to identify the number of days the school was closed during each of the two school years, to sum these numbers, to subtract from the number of "possible" school days given in Part I and to record the net number of instruction days. These results are presented in Tables 3.02 through 3.12.

Data concerning the lengths of the summer and Easter/spring vacations are shown in Tables 3.02 and 3.03. Large majorities of schools at all three levels, elementary, junior high and senior high reported that the traditional school vacations were held during each of the two school years, that is, the common practice of scheduling a ten-week summer vacation and a one-week Easter/spring vacation was adhered to generally across the province during the school years 1969-70 and 1975-76.

Tables 3.04 and 3.05 present data concerning the number of board declared holidays and the number of emergency school stoppages during each of the two years surveyed. All three school levels reported more board holidays in 1975-76 than in 1969-70. Seventy elementary schools, 25 junior high schools, and 7 high schools

Table 3.02

Length of Summer Vacation by School Level and School Year

Summer Vacation (Number of Days Excluding Weekends)	School Level					
	Elementary		Junior High		Senior High	
	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76
36-40	3	5	2	4	0	4
41-41.5	3	18	1	9	2	6
42-42.5	10	21	8	15	3	8
43-43.5	273	288	187	179	97	83
44-44.5	17	30	12	25	4	10
45-45.5	30	8	17	6	7	2
46-46.5	3	48	2	30	1	13
47-56.0	10	10	5	3	5	1
Total Schools Reporting	349	428	234	277	119	127

Table 3.03

Length of Easter/Spring Vacation by School Level and School Year

Easter/Spring Vacation (Number of Days Excluding Weekends)	School Level					
	Elementary		Junior High		Senior High	
	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76
4 or less	3	2	3	1	2	0
5-5.5	323	391	218	252	110	113
6-6.5	20	31	10	23	6	12
7 or more	3	5	3	4	1	2
Total Schools Reporting	349	429	234	280	119	127

Table 3.04

Frequency of Board Declared Holidays by School Level and School Year

Board Declared Holidays (Number of Days)	School Level					
	Elementary		Junior High		Senior High	
	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76
0-0.5	109	197	46	110	26	45
1-1.5	153	89	118	66	59	33
2-2.5	34	73	24	44	13	23
3-3.5	43	40	33	35	17	19
4-4.5	6	20	6	15	2	6
5 or more	4	10	6	10	2	1
Total Schools Reporting	349	429	233	280	119	127

Table 3.05

Frequency of Emergency School Stoppages by School Level and School Year

School Stoppages (Number of Days)	School Level					
	Elementary		Junior High		Senior High	
	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76
0-0.5	308	352	205	218	107	103
1-1.5	27	44	15	32	8	12
2-2.5	9	21	8	19	3	8
3-3.5	3	5	3	5	1	2
4-23	2	7	2	6	0	2
Total Schools Reporting	349	429	233	280	119	127

reported three or more board declared holidays in 1975-76 whereas 53 elementary, 12 junior high and 4 senior high schools reported this number of holidays in 1969-70. Similarly, all three levels reported more emergency school stoppages in 1975-76 than for 1969-70 with 33 elementary, 30 junior high, and 12 senior high schools reporting two or more emergency stoppages for 1975-76 compared with 14 elementary, 13 junior high and 4 senior high schools reporting this number for 1969-70.

No significant differences were noted in the reported number of work stoppage days or in the number of convention days between the two school years for any one of the three school levels. The data reported are shown in Tables 3.06 and 3.07.

Table 3.06

Frequency of Work Stoppage Days by School Level and School Year

Work Stoppage (Number of Days)	School Level Elementary 1969-70	 1975-76	 Junior High 1969-70	 1975-76	 Senior High 1969-70	 1975-76
0-0.5	341	422	226	275	116	123
1-1.5	2	2	0	0	0	0
2-2.5	1	2	2	2	1	1
3-3.5	0	0	1	0	0	0
4-5.5	0	1	0	0	0	0
6-13	5	2	4	3	2	3
Total Schools Reporting	349	429	233	280	119	127

Table 3.07

Frequency of Convention Days by School Level and School Year

Convention Days (Number of Days)	Elementary 1969-70	Elementary 1975-76	Junior High 1969-70	Junior High 1975-76	Senior High 1969-70	Senior High 1975-76
0	3	5	3	7	0	0
2-2.5	344	418	230	270	119	126
3-3.5	2	5	0	1	0	0
4-6	0	1	0	2	0	1
Total Schools Reporting	349	429	233	280	119	127

An increase in the number of professional days and in the number of organizational days between the two years, 1969-70 and 1975-76 was reported by all three school levels. Two hundred and twenty elementary, 124 junior high, and 49 senior high schools reported holding between 2 and 5½ professional days in 1975-76 compared with 50 elementary, 26 junior high and 6 senior high schools that reported this number for the 1969-70 school year. Eighty-nine elementary, 73 junior high and 32 senior high schools reported between 2 and 4 organizational days for the 1975-76 school year compared with 15 elementary, 13 junior high and 17 senior high schools that reported this number for 1969-70. Eleven elementary, 10 junior high and 17 senior high schools reported holding between five and eight organizational days during 1975-76 compared with two senior high schools that reported this great a number in 1969-70. These data are presented in Tables 3.08 and 3.09.

No appreciable differences were reported between the two school years for any of the three school levels with respect to the

Table 3.08

Frequency of Professional Days by School Level and School Year

Professional Days (Number of Days)	School Level					
	Elementary		Junior High		Senior High	
	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76
0-0.5	172	57	121	41	65	25
1-1.5	127	152	86	115	48	53
2-2.5	35	119	17	78	4	35
3-3.5	12	83	7	35	1	12
4-4.5	2	7	2	5	1	1
5-5.5	1	9	0	3	0	1
6-9	0	2	0	3	0	0
Total Schools Reporting	349	429	233	280	119	127

Table 3.09

Frequency of Organizational Days by School Level and School Year

Organizational Days (Number of Days)	School Level					
	Elementary		Junior High		Senior High	
	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76
0-0.5	233	75	149	47	75	21
1-1.5	43	89	35	58	12	19
2-2.5	58	165	36	92	13	38
3-3.5	12	58	11	49	8	16
4-4.5	3	31	2	24	9	16
5-8	0	11	0	10	2	17
Total Schools Reporting	349	429	233	280	119	127

number of parent-teacher interview days, the number of examination or testing days and the number of unknown days. The data reported for these categories are presented in Tables 3.10, 3.11 and 3.12.

Table 3.10

Frequency of Parent-Teacher Interview Days
by School Level and School Year

	School Level					
	Elementary		Junior High		Senior High	
Interviews (Number of Days)	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76
0-0.5	132	78	92	63	62	37
1-1.5	157	210	108	124	43	46
2-2.5	56	132	32	89	14	42
3-3.5	4	8	0	3	0	0
4-5.5	0	1	1	1	0	2
Total Schools Reporting	349	429	233	280	119	127

Table 3.11

Frequency of Testing Days by School Level and School Year

	School Level					
	Elementary		Junior High		Senior High	
Testing (Number of Days)	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76
0-0.5	340	412	198	223	34	39
1-1.5	1	1	1	1	0	1
2-3.5	5	9	13	31	9	9
4-5.5	3	4	12	17	15	28
6-7.5	0	1	6	5	26	19
8-10.5	0	2	3	3	22	23
11-23	0	0	0	0	13	8
Total Schools Reporting	349	429	233	280	119	127

Table 3.12

Frequency of Unknown Days by School Level and School Year

Other (Number of Days)	Elementary 1969-70	Elementary 1975-76	Junior High 1969-70	Junior High 1975-76	Senior High 1969-70	Senior High 1975-76
0-0.5	332	397	214	244	109	114
1-1.5	9	16	8	16	8	4
2-2.5	4	10	5	10	1	4
3-3.5	1	1	1	2	0	2
4-9	3	5	4	7	1	2
10+	0	0	1	0	0	1
Total Schools Reporting	329	429	233	279	119	127

THE INSTRUCTIONAL YEARS FOR STUDENTS, 1969-70 AND 1975-76

Using the data reported in the previous section, calculations were performed to obtain the net length of the instruction year for students in each of the three school levels and for each of the two school years. The frequencies of the lengths of these instructional years are presented in Table 3.13.

A further reduction of these data was performed by calculating the change in the length of the instructional year for students in each of the school levels occurring between the two school years. Schools reporting more instructional days for students during 1975-76 than during 1969-70 were deemed to have had an increase in the length of the instructional year. Schools reporting fewer instructional days for students during 1975-76 than during 1969-70 were deemed to have had a decrease in the length of the instructional year. Table 3.14 presents the number of schools at each of the

Table 3.13

Frequency of Instructional Days by School Level and School Year

Instruction (Number of Days)	School Level Elementary 1969-70	 1975-76	 Junior High 1969-70	 1975-76	 Senior High 1969-70	 1975-76
Below 175	3	0	2	2	2	3
175-179.5	6	3	6	3	10	8
180-184.5	4	15	6	20	18	40
185-185.5	4	5	1	9	13	12
186-186.5	3	14	5	17	14	9
187-187.5	3	17	1	16	4	6
188-188.5	3	31	8	28	13	10
189-189.5	13	38	11	27	11	10
190-190.5	22	52	16	32	6	10
191-191.5	36	66	26	35	6	4
192-192.5	63	81	37	38	6	4
193-193.5	55	55	48	21	4	3
194-194.5	46	22	33	16	4	5
195-195.5	30	18	12	9	2	1
196-196.5	27	5	8	2	2	1
197-197.5	26	5	10	2	3	0
198-198.5	5	1	2	0	1	1
199	0	0	1	0	1	0
Total Schools Reporting	349	428	233	277	120	127

three levels, elementary, junior high and senior high, ordered by a specified increase or decrease in the number of instructional days for students between the two years. Because the analysis of the data comprising this section of the report was conducted several days after the cut-off date for receiving replies for earlier sections, the total number of schools reporting is slightly higher than appears in those sections.

Table 3.14

Change in Length of the Instructional Year for Students by School Level Between 1969-70 and 1975-76

Change in Length of Instructional Year	(Number of Days)	School Level		
		Elementary	Junior High	Senior High
	+10-20	10	4	4
INCREASE	+5.5-9.5	4	1	9
	+2-5	24	16	12
	+.5-1.5	22	16	11
NO CHANGE	0	43	18	10
	-.5-1.5	50	33	20
	-2-5	173	110	34
DECREASE	-5.5-9.5	39	38	14
	-10-15	6	7	5
Total Schools Reporting		371	243	119

Analysis of the information received from 371 elementary schools indicated that 50 schools had a decrease of between one-half and 1½ instructional days; 173 schools had a decrease of between 2 and

5 instructional days; 39 schools had a decrease of between 5½ and 9½ instructional days; and 6 schools had a decrease of between 10 and 15 instructional days. On the other hand, 22 schools had an increase of between one-half and 1½ instructional days; 24 schools had an increase of between 2 and 5 days; 4 schools had an increase of between 5½ and 9½ days. Ten schools, all of which reported a strike of teachers during 1969-70, reported an increase of between 10 and 20 days.

A similar pattern of change in the length of the instructional year for students emerged from the analysis of the data reported by junior and senior high schools. One hundred and forty-eight junior high schools and 48 senior high schools had decreases of between 2 and 9½ instructional days compared with 17 junior high schools and 21 senior high schools that had increases of between 2 and 9½ days.

Forty-three elementary schools, 18 junior high schools and 10 senior high schools reported no change in the lengths of the 1969-70 and 1975-76 instructional years for students.

School Opening and Closing Dates, 1969-70 and 1975-76

Tables 3.15 and 3.16 report the information obtained from responding schools on the 1969-70 and 1975-76 school year opening and closing dates for teachers. No appreciable differences were reported across the two years for any of the three school levels. For both years Labour Day fell on September 1st and the vast majority opened on the day following. Most schools in both years closed on June 30th though for the 1969-70 year 46 elementary, 26 Junior High and 9 Senior High schools closed on the Friday before June 30th.

In the 1975-76 year 68 elementary, 44 Junior High and 19 Senior High schools closed on the Friday before June 30th.

Table 3.15

School Opening Date for Teachers by School Level and School Year

	School Level					
	Elementary		Junior High		Senior High	
Opening Date	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76
August 24 or before	3	1	2	0	0	0
August 25	7	29	2	18	3	11
August 27	0	2	0	1	0	1
August 28	2	11	0	9	1	6
August 29	1	10	0	7	0	4
August 30	1	1	1	0	0	0
September 1	5	12	3	9	1	2
September 2	327	349	218	228	112	102
September 3	1	10	4	6	0	0
September 4	1	0	0	0	1	1
September 5 or later	0	2	1	2	0	0
Total Schools Reporting	348	427	231	280	118	127

Extension of Christmas Vacation Periods

As reported in Table 3.17 during both of the school years 1969-70 and 1975-76 the majority of the schools across all three levels reported none to no more than a one half-day extension of the Christmas Vacation period involving school days either before December 24th or after January 4th. However, of the minority of schools that did report such extensions, the proportions of each of the three levels for 1975-76 were approximately double those for 1969-70.

Table 3.16

School Closing Date for Teachers by School Level and School Year

	School Level					
	Elementary		Junior High		Senior High	
Closing Date	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76
June 09 or earlier	3	0	1	0	0	0
June 10	6	0	2	0	3	0
June 11-16	1	2	1	1	0	1
June 18	0	19	0	13	0	5
June 22	0	2	0	1	1	0
June 23	1	0	1	0	1	0
June 24	0	0	0	1	0	1
June 25	2	68	3	44	1	19
June 26	46	2	26	1	9	0
June 28	0	2	0	2	0	0
June 29	12	22	10	16	4	6
June 30	277	309	187	200	99	95
July 1 or later	0	2	0	1	0	0
Total Schools Reporting	348	428	231	280	118	127

Table 3.17

Extension of Christmas Vacation by School Level and School Year

	School Level					
	Elementary		Junior High		Senior High	
School Days Prior to Dec.24 and/or after Jan. 4 included in Christmas Vacation	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76
0-0.5	294	291	192	187	96	78
1-1.5	10	9	4	3	4	2
2-2.5	39	123	31	84	17	44
3-3.5	6	5	3	2	1	2
4-4.5	1	0	0	1	0	1
5-5.5	0	1	0	1	0	0
Total Schools Reporting	350	429	230	278	118	127

Last Day Before Easter/Spring Break

Data regarding the final work day for teachers prior to the Easter/Spring Break are reported in Table 3.18. In the school year 1969-70 the last day of work for almost every school was March 26th, the day before Good Friday. In the 1975-76 school year, however, Good Friday fell on April 16th and large minorities, 199 elementary, 103 junior high and 46 high schools again reported selecting March 26th as the last day of work prior to the Easter/Spring break rather than April 15th.

Table 3.18

School Closing Dates for Easter/Spring Break
by School Level and School Year

	School Level					
	Elementary		Junior High		Senior High	
Closing Date	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76
March 18 or earlier	1	3	1	1	0	1
March 19	0	0	0	1	0	0
March 25	2	5	2	4	1	3
March 26	339	199	220	103	114	46
March 27	1	0	0	0	0	0
March 28	0	0	0	1	0	0
March 29	0	1	0	0	1	0
March 30	2	2	1	3	0	1
April 02	0	3	0	3	0	1
April 04	1	0	0	0	0	0
April 06	0	2	0	0	0	0
April 09	0	1	0	1	0	0
April 12	0	1	0	0	0	0
April 14	0	1	0	0	0	0
April 15 or later	2	208	6	159	1	73
Total Schools Reporting	348	426	230	276	117	125

LENGTH OF STUDENT INSTRUCTIONAL DAY

In the final section of the questionnaire respondents were asked to supply information regarding the length of the student day. They were first asked to specify the length of the student day in minutes between school opening and closing for regular instructional purposes, then to subtract from that figure first, the duration of the noon break in minutes and second, the daily sum of recesses and period breaks in minutes. This subtraction provided the net length of the instructional day expressed in minutes. Respondents for elementary schools were further requested to indicate if there was any reduction for Grade I students in the length of the instructional day, as compared with students in Grades II to VI by expressing that figure in minutes per day averaged over the school year.

No appreciable differences were reported between the two school years, nor across the three school levels in the length of the student instructional day, in the duration of student noon break, or in the net length of the student instructional day. These data are presented in Tables 3.19 through 3.22. No appreciable differences were reported concerning the amount the student day had been shortened for Grade I students. As these data were not part of the calculation of the net instructional day for the elementary schools, they are reported separately in Table 3.23.

Table 3.19

Length of Student Instructional Day by School Level and School Year

	School Level					
	Elementary		Junior High		Senior High	
Minutes Per Day	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76
320 or less	3	5	4	8	4	5
321-330	15	23	3	8	0	0
331-340	3	2	4	3	3	2
341-350	2	2	1	0	0	0
351-360	1	3	3	4	2	3
361-370	9	13	10	11	6	8
371-380	11	20	12	26	3	10
381-390	148	182	88	99	30	33
391-400	39	64	50	66	33	37
401-410	48	74	35	38	20	16
410-421	52	22	10	5	12	7
421-430	0	2	1	3	2	1
431-440	4	3	2	3	1	2
441-450	1	2	1	1	0	0
451-460	1	0	0	0	0	0
461-470	1	1	0	0	0	0
471 or more	1	2	0	1	0	0
Total Schools Reporting	339	420	224	276	116	124

Table 3.20

Length of Student Noon Breaks by School Level and School Year

	School Level					
	Elementary		Junior High		Senior High	
Minutes Per Day	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76
40 or less	8	17	10	17	9	15
41-50	13	30	20	36	16	28
51-60	205	240	143	133	70	67
61-70	23	29	13	25	11	10
71-80	44	78	23	37	7	6
81-90	47	34	16	11	4	0
91-100	1	1	1	0		0
101-110	1	1	0	0		0
111-120	1	0	1	0		0
121 or more	0	0	0	1		0
Total Schools Reporting	343	430	227	260	117	126

Table 3.21

Length of Student Recess and/or Period Breaks by School Level and School Year

	School Level					
	Elementary		Junior High		Senior High	
Minutes Per Day	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76
1-10	1	5	46	52	40	36
11-20	11	46	71	83	54	62
21-30	314	351	90	101	18	20
31-40	12	22	4	11	1	2
41-50	1	1	0	1	0	0
51-60	1	2	0	0	0	0
61 or more	0	1	0	0	0	0
Total Schools Reporting	340	428	211	248	113	120

Table 3.22

Net Length of Student Instructional Day by School Level and School Year

	School Level					
	Elementary		Junior High		Senior High	
Minutes Per Day	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76	1969-70	1975-76
200 or less	1	2	2	1	1	1
201-210	3	4	0	1	0	0
211-220	1	1	0	0	0	0
221-230	2	4	0	0	0	0
231-240	13	14	3	4	2	1
241-250	4	4	2	1	0	1
251-260	0	4	2	2	0	0
261-270	0	2	2	4	1	0
271-280	4	6	5	4	1	1
281-290	9	16	4	8	0	1
291-300	221	263	61	72	4	4
301-310	44	58	31	40	3	4
311-320	18	21	80	90	73	73
321-330	13	11	24	34	18	27
331-340	0	2	4	5	9	7
341-350	1	0	1	3	1	0
351-360	2	2	1	1	1	0
361 or more	1	4	2	4	2	2
Total Schools Reporting	337	418	224	274	116	122

Table 3.23

Amount Student Day Shortened from Regular Instructional Day for Grade One Students by School Year

	Elementary	
Minutes Per Day	1969-70	1975-76
0	188	231
1-10	13	19
11-20	19	23
21-30	38	50
31-40	5	7
41-50	10	16
51-60	75	82
61-70	1	1
Total Schools Reporting	349	429

Chapter 4

ANALYSIS OF SCHOOL YEAR AND SCHOOL DAY PREFERENCES BY INTERESTED GROUPS

Information on the preferences held with respect to the length of the school year, the length and scheduling of vacations, the length of the students' instructional year, and the level of the educational hierarchy at which decisions regarding these matters should be made was gathered from five sources, trustees, superintendents, principals, teachers and parents. This chapter reports the findings of that survey.

The survey questionnaire consisted of five parts. In the first part participants were requested to identify their role in education, trustee, superintendent, principal, teacher, or parent and to identify their type of jurisdiction, school division or county, city public, city separate, or rural public or rural separate. The second part included a calendar for the 1977-78 school year and sought information concerning preferred school opening and closing dates for that school year. Using the same calendar, the third part dealt with preferences concerning the Christmas, Easter/spring and summer vacations. It requested information dealing with dismissal dates, opening dates, and durations of each of the three vacations for the 1977-78 school year. The fourth part dealt with the amount of student instructional time. It asked participants to state their preferences in terms of an increase, decrease, or no change over the 1976-77 school year. The fifth part sought information concerning the level, school and community, school board or school committee, provincial government, or any other specified level in the educational system at which decisions concerning an identified list of aspects concerning the school year and the teacher-student instructional day should be made. In addition, each part provided space for comments.

The Alberta School Trustees' Association provided a mailing list of names and addresses of the 931 Alberta school trustees, conducted the mailing and requested each trustee to complete the questionnaire. A mailing list from the Department of Education provided the names and addresses of the 99 Alberta school superintendents and 1,314 school principals in the province's public and separate school systems. All 99 superintendents and 1,314 principals were asked to complete the questionnaire. The questionnaire was mailed to a sample of 1,275 Alberta teachers chosen randomly as follows: using the mailing list of school principals referred to above, all schools with a staff of six teachers or more were identified, a random selection made of 200 of these schools, and packets of six or seven questionnaires mailed to principals with a request to distribute the questionnaires to a staff member of each grade in the case of elementary schools, or to a member of each department in the case of secondary schools. Each of the 1,275 teachers was asked to complete the questionnaire. Finally, a mailing list from The Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations provided the names and addresses of parents currently enrolled in the Federation. From this list 1,000 names were drawn randomly, and all 1,000 parents requested to complete the questionnaire. Table 4.01 shows the number of questionnaires mailed, the number of returns, and the return rates by categories.

Table 4.01

Questionnaire Returns by Respondent Category

Category	Number Distributed	Number Returned	Percent Usable Return
Trustees	931	216	23
Superintendents	99	83	84
Principals	1,314	608	46
Teachers	1,275	781	61
Parents	1,000	254	25

As noted in previous paragraphs, the survey was constructed in such a way as to include the preferences of all Alberta school trustees, superintendents and principals, together with a sample of teachers and parents. This characteristic of the survey was valuable in drawing upon as large a number of possible respondents as could be handled conveniently. On the other hand, the sample was not constructed nor the analysis of the data conducted with a view to deriving statistical generalizations. The following pages therefore focus upon describing the preferences associated with the school year and school day as reported by the survey respondents.

SCHOOL OPENING AND SCHOOL CLOSING

Respondents were supplied with a calendar for the 1977-78 school year and requested to supply information regarding their preferences for school opening and school closing dates and to describe briefly any particular family, occupational, health, or other factors influencing their responses.

Table 4.02 presents the preferred opening and closing dates ordered according to both the respondent category and the type of jurisdiction to which the respondent belonged.

Table 4.03 presents a percentage distribution of the preferred opening and closing dates ordered according to respondent category.

An analysis of the data performed across the type of jurisdiction within each respondent category yielded no appreciable differences. When the responses were examined across respondent categories certain notable differences were identified.

Fifty-one percent of the trustees and 61 percent of the superintendents indicated a preference for opening the schools before Labour Day, whereas 71 percent of the principals, 74 percent of the teachers and 76 percent of the parents indicated a preference for opening the schools after Labour Day.

When the preferences for a pre-Labour Day opening were examined it was found that 59 percent of the trustees, 67 percent of the superintendents, 48 percent of the principals, 38 percent of the teachers and 58 percent of the parents chose June 30 as the school closing date.

Examination of the preferences for a post-Labour Day opening revealed that 68 percent of the trustees, 64 percent of the superintendents, 68 percent of the principals, 53 percent of the teachers and 53 percent of the parents also chose June 30 as the school closing date.

Table 4.02

Frequency Distribution of Preference for School Opening and School Closing Dates by Respondent Category and Type of School Jurisdiction

Preferred Dates		Respondent Category/Type of Jurisdiction																													
		TRUSTEES						SUPERINTENDENTS						PRINCIPALS						TEACHERS						PARENTS					
Opening	Closing	Cty Div	Cp	Cs	Rp	Rs	U	Cty Div	Cp	Cs	Rp	Rs	U	Cty Div	Cp	Cs	Rp	Rs	U	Cty Div	Cp	Cs	Rp	Rs	U	Cty Div	Cp	Cs	Rp	Rs	U
BEFORE LABOUR DAY																															
Prior to Sept. 1	June 23 or earlier	7	1	2	6	3	9	4	1	2	1	.	3	15	12	12	9	5	12	25	23	12	11	x	5	4	.	1	1	.	7
	June 24-June 29	3	1	.	3	1	1	.	.	1	3	.	.	3	1	.	.	.	1	6	1	3	.	x	.	2	1	.	2	.	.
	June 30	4	3	1	6	3	3	6	.	.	.	.	2	20	7	3	6	2	5	11	8	4	12	x	5	3	2	.	3	1	3
Sept. 1	June 23 or earlier	.	.	.	.	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	9	1	.	1	.	.	7	8	6	3	x	3	1	1	1	.	.	2
	June 24-June 29	5	1	.	.	.	.	1	.	.	1	.	.	4	.	.	1	.	3	4	1	1	2	x	2	1	.	.	.	.	1
	June 30	21	6	1	5	3	6	7	1	.	2	1	15	20	8	1	6	1	7	22	7	.	12	x	1	6	.	1	7	.	8
AFTER LABOUR DAY																															
Sept. 5	June 23 or earlier	.	.	1	.	.	1	1	.	.	.	.	.	6	3	1	2	2	2	34	26	3	10	x	5	4	3	.	4	1	8
	June 24-June 29	.	1	.	.	2	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	6	.	1	2	.	3	6	8	2	8	x	1	1	2	.	4	1	6
	June 30	7	2	.	5	3	3	.	.	.	.	.	.	20	19	4	6	2	15	27	49	4	8	x	7	13	5	.	11	1	22
Sept. 6	June 23 or earlier	2	1	1	1	1	4	.	.	.	.	.	.	20	23	14	4	1	14	38	49	14	19	x	9	5	1	.	14	1	9
	June 24-June 29	4	3	1	4	1	3	.	.	.	.	.	1	13	5	5	2	3	2	14	17	4	4	x	2	5	1	.	3	.	5
	June 30	16	4	9	7	6	7	8	4	1	.	2	15	81	62	24	15	3	41	58	68	13	26	x	3	9	10	1	9	.	22
After Sept. 6	June 23 or earlier	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	.	2	.	.	1	2	11	4	3	x	1	.	1	.	1	.	3
	June 24-June 29	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	2	.	.	.	x	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
	June 30	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	1	.	1	.	.	.	1	2	1	.	x	.	.	.	.	1	.	2
Other		1	.	.	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	3	.	.	.	1	.	5	.	.	2	x	.	1	1	.	.	.	1

Cty/Div = County or Division
Cp = City Public
Cs = City Separate
Rp = Rural Public
Rs = Rural Separate
U = Unknown
x = No Returns

Table 4.03

Percentage Frequency Distribution of Preferences for School Opening and School Closing Dates by Educational Role of Respondent

Preferred Dates		Respondent Category				
Opening	Closing	Trustee	Superintendent	Principal	Teacher	Parent
BEFORE LABOUR DAY		%	%	%	%	%
Prior to Sept. 1	June 23 or earlier	13.5	13.0	11.0	10.0	5.0
Prior to Sept. 1	June 30	10.0	10.0	7.0	5.0	5.0
Sept. 1	June 30	20.0	31.0	7.0	5.0	9.0
Other		8.0	7.0	4.0	6.0	5.0
AFTER LABOUR DAY						
Sept. 5	June 23 or earlier	0.1	19.0	3.0	10.0	8.0
Sept. 5	June 30	10.0	0.0	11.0	12.0	21.0
Sept. 6	June 23 or earlier	5.0	0.0	12.5	17.0	12.0
Sept. 6	June 30	23.5	36.0	37.0	22.0	20.0
Other		11.0	1.0	8.0	13.0	17.0

When all possible opening and closing dates for the 1977-78 school year were considered, the most popular single combination was an opening date of September 5 or 6 and a closing date of June 30. This combination was preferred by 34 percent of the trustees, 36 percent of the superintendents, 48 percent of the principals, 39 percent of the teachers and 41 percent of the parents.

Table 4.04 presents a summary of the comments given in support of stated preferences for school opening and closing dates ordered by the category of the respondent.

Table 4.04

Comments Concerning Preferences for School Opening and Closing Dates by Respondent Category

Opening Date	Comment	Category
Sept. 1	-Allows two organizational days before Labour Day	Trustee
	-Allows for earlier closing (June 23)	"
Sept. 5 or 6	-Absenteeism high if schools open for students before Labour Day	"
	-Allows for family Labour Day holidays	"
	-Allows for help with the harvest	"
Sept. 1	-Traditional summer holiday (Sept. 1-June 30) is satisfactory	Superintendent
	-Allows for two organization days before Labour Day	"
	-Facilitates 200-day school year	"
Sept. 5 or 6	-Absenteeism high if school opens before Labour Day	"
	-District opinion surveys advocate this	"
	-Tradition	"
	-Parents prefer post-Labour Day opening	"
	-Farmers prefer post-Labour Day opening	"
Sept. 1	-Allows for two organization days before Labour Day	Principal
	-Open early and close early (June 23) as instruction is ineffective in late June	"

Table 4.04 (continued)

Opening Date	Comment	Category
Sept. 5 or 6	-Absenteeism high if schools open before Labour Day	Principal
	-Traditional	"
	-Allows for help with the harvest	"
	-Nothing gained by opening before Labour Day	"
	-High school students don't return from their summer employment until after Labour Day	"
Aug. 21	-Close on June 16; allows for trimestering	Teacher
	-Close early (June 16-23), due to hot June weather	"
	-Close early (June 16-23) to permit attendance at U.S.universities	"
	-Close early (June 16-23) to allow students to obtain summer employment	"
Sept. 1	-Allows for two organization days if students commence after Labour Day	"
	-Traditional summer holiday (close June 30) is quite satisfactory	"
Sept. 5 or 6	-Absenteeism high if schools open before Labour Day	"
	-Allows for student help with the harvest	"
	-Families use Labour Day for holidays	"
	-Nothing gained by opening before Labour Day	"
	-Parents and farmers prefer post-Labour Day opening	"
Sept. 1	-Traditional summer holiday (close June 30) is satisfactory	Parent
	-Close early (June 23) as learning is ineffective in late June because of the heat	"
Sept. 5 or 6	-Families take long holiday over Labour Day	"
	-Tradition	"
	-Facilitates student help on the farm	"
	-Starting before Labour Day ruins the holiday	"
	-Students are needed on the farm until after Labour Day	"
June 16 (Closing Date)	-Instruction is ineffective in late June due to the heat	Trustee
	-Allows students to work on the farm	"

Table 4.04 (continued)

Closing Date	Comment	Category
June 23	-School year should be shortened	Trustee
	-Early closing to allow students to obtain summer employment	"
	-Allows teachers time for "end-of-year" activities	"
June 30	-Tradition	"
	-Facilitates 200-day year	"
	-No reason to change	"
June 23	-Allows students a better chance of obtaining summer employment	Superintendent
June 30	-Traditional year is satisfactory	"
	-No reason to change	"
June 16 - 23	-Early closing allows for attendance at U.S. universities	Principal
	-Close early, schools too hot in June	"
	-Close early to permit students to obtain summer employment	"
June 30	-Traditional year is satisfactory	"
	-Facilitates 200-day year	"
June 16 - 23	-Close early, schools are too hot in June	Teacher
	-High absenteeism in June, so close early	"
	-Allows teachers to attend U.S. universities	"
	-Close early, teachers and students are tired in June	"
	-Prefer shorter school year; U.S. schools perform well on shorter year, why can't we?	"
June 28 or 29	-Allows teachers to complete their end-of-year activities	"
June 30	-Tradition	"
	-No reason to change	"
June 16 - 23	-Close early, allows for holidays befor the hay season	Parent
	-Close early, student learning is ineffective in late June due to heat	"
	-Elementary children are tired and need early break	"
June 30	-Tradition	"
	-July and August are good holiday months, who needs any longer?	"
	-Holidays in July and August are appropriate for farming needs	"

When the preferences for a pre-Labour Day opening and a post-Labour Day opening were examined without consideration for the category of the respondents, it was found that 30 percent of the 1,916 respondents preferred to open the schools either on or prior to September 1st, whereas 70 percent of the respondents preferred an opening on or after September 5th. Table 4.05 illustrates these findings.

Table 4.05

Percentage Frequency Distribution of Preferences for School Opening and Closing Dates

Preferred Dates		Percentage of Respondents
Opening	Closing	(N = 1,916)
BEFORE LABOUR DAY		%
Prior to Sept. 1	June 23 or earlier	10
Prior to Sept. 1	June 30	6
Sept. 1	June 30	9
Other		5
Total		30
AFTER LABOUR DAY		
Sept. 5	June 23 or earlier	6
Sept. 5	June 30	12
Sept. 6	June 23 or earlier	13
Sept. 6	June 30	27
Other		12
Total		70

SCHOOL VACATIONS: DATES AND DURATIONS

The Survey asked the following question:

> Using the attached calendar for the 1977-78 school year, please indicate your preferred dates of school closing and

school opening as well as your preferred duration for each of the following traditional vacations: Christmas, Easter/Spring, Summer. (Duration should include closing and opening days as well as weekend days.)

	Christmas		Easter/Spring		Summer	
Closing date	_____ month	___ day	_____ month	___ day	_____ month	___ day
Opening date	_____ month	___ day	_____ month	___ day	_____ month	___ day
Duration	_____	days	_____	days	_____	days

Are there any particular family, occupational, health or other matters influencing your response? If so, please explain briefly.

Table 4.06 presents the preferred durations of each of the three vacation periods ordered according to both the respondent category and the type of jurisdiction to which the respondent belonged. Analysis of these data yielded no appreciable differences across type of jurisdiction within each respondent category.

Table 4.07 presents a percentage distribution of the preferred durations ordered only according to respondent category. A majority of all groups, trustees, superintendents, principals, teachers and parents indicated a preference for traditional vacation durations: Christmas (8-12 days); Easter/Spring (8-10 days); and Summer (63-69 days, or 9-10 weeks).

Certain significant minority preferences were noted. Twenty-two percent of superintendents, 27 percent of principals, and 36 percent of teachers preferred that the Christmas vacation be lengthened by as much as one week. Twenty-five percent of trustees and 25 percent of superintendents preferred that the summer vacation be shortened by as much as one week. On the other hand, 27 percent of teachers expressed a preference for an extension of the summer

Table 4.06

Frequency Distribution of Respondents' Preferences for Christmas, Easter/Spring, and Summer Vacation Durations by Respondent Category and Type of School Jurisdiction

		Respondent Category/Type of Jurisdiction																													
		TRUSTEES						SUPERINTENDENTS						PRINCIPALS						TEACHERS						PARENTS					
Vacation	Duration # of Days	Cty Div	Cp	Cs	Rp	Rs	U	Cty Div	Cp	Cs	Rp	Rs	U	Cty Div	Cp	Cs	Rp	Rs	U	Cty Div	Cp	Cs	Rp	Rs	U	Cty Div	Cp	Cs	Rp	Rs	U
	Less than 8	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	.	.	x	.	.	1	.	.	.	2
Christmas	8 - 12	63	18	12	22	19	31	16	6	4	3	3	31	147	97	41	37	12	81	155	175	36	57	x	24	38	24	3	52	5	79
	13 - 17	6	3	3	11	3	8	8	.	.	4	.	6	68	35	17	17	5	34	93	98	25	48	x	18	14	2	1	7	.	16
	18 and over	3	1	1	3	2	.	2	.	.	.	.	.	8	7	7	.	2	5	14	26	9	9	x	3	1	1	.	2	.	2
	Less than 8	1	1	1	.	1	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	5	1	2	.	.	.	.	4	.	.	x	.	2	1	.	1	1	8
	8 - 10	63	19	12	31	19	34	26	6	4	7	3	37	202	129	56	48	17	114	246	252	63	104	x	42	44	25	4	56	3	87
Easter/ Spring	11 and over	3	1	2	2	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	7	1	2	1	4	5	18	5	4	x	1	4	2	.	1	.	2
	Prefer Easter	47	19	13	25	18	25	16	6	2	7	3	33	102	73	27	33	10	16	179	193	45	67	x	29	14	20	4	21	3	30
	Prefer Spring	15	3	2	8	4	8	10	.	2	.	.	4	37	15	10	6	3	3	71	79	17	42	x	13	13	9	.	13	.	18
	28 - 55	4	1	.	.	3	1	.	.	1	.	.	1	2	.	.	.	.	2	5	5	3	3	x	.	1	3	.	1	1	2
	56 - 62	19	6	1	12	4	10	10	1	1	2	.	7	32	9	4	10	2	11	28	14	7	12	x	6	10	2	2	8	.	13
Summer	63 - 69	44	12	12	22	16	22	14	5	2	4	3	29	146	101	42	35	12	71	129	174	28	61	x	22	31	18	2	33	2	61
	70 - 76	4	2	3	2	1	4	2	.	.	.	.	1	34	21	15	5	5	19	74	68	25	31	x	12	5	4	.	13	.	13
	77 - 83	.	1	.	.	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	4	11	2	3	.	2	14	21	6	5	x	3	5	.	.	2	.	3
	84 and over	1	.	.	1	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	3	.	1	.	.	.	14	7	2	1	x	1	2	1	.	4	2	8

Cty/Div = County or Division
Cp = City Public
Cs = City Separate
Rp = Rural Public
Rs = Rural Separate
U = Unknown
x = No Returns

Table 4.07

Percentage Frequency Distribution of Respondents' Preferences for Christmas, Easter/Spring, Summer Vacation Durations by Respondent Category

Vacation	Duration (days)	Respondent Category				
		Trustee	Superintendent	Principal	Teacher	Parent
		%	%	%	%	%
Christmas	8-12	84	76	67	57	80
	13-17	16	22	27	36	16
	Other	0	2	6	7	4
Easter/ Spring	8-10	93	100	96	95	91
	Other	7	0	4	5	9
Summer	56-62	25	25	11	9	14
	63-69	61	69	67	53	58
	70-76	8	4	16	27	14
	Other	6	2	6	11	14

vacation period by as much as one week.

Table 4.08 presents a summary of the comments given in support of stated preferences concerning Christmas, Easter/Spring, and Summer vacations ordered by vacation and respondent category.

Table 4.08

Comments Concerning Christmas, Easter/Spring and Summer Vacations by Respondent Category

Vacation	Comment	Category
Christmas	-Prefer longer Christmas vacation and shorter summer	Trustee
	-Prefer longer Christmas vacation to facilitate travel	"
	-Prefer longer Christmas vacation to facilitate family skiing	"
	-Keep traditional Christmas vacation	"
	-Prefer longer Christmas to facilitate longer family holidays and travel	Superintendent
	-Public opinion surveys advocate traditional vacation periods	"
	-Prefer longer Christmas vacation; facilitates travel from isolated areas	Principal
	-Prefer longer Christmas vacation; teachers and students need a longer recuperation period	"
	-Prefer longer Christmas; allows family winter holidays in distant parts	"
	-Prefer longer Christmas vacation to facilitate winter holidays and travel	Teacher
	-Prefer longer Christmas vacation and shorter summer	"
Easter/ Spring	-Prefer traditional Easter vacation as it is more compatible with business holidays	Trustee
	-Prefer Easter for religious reasons	"
	-Prefer standardized break at Easter	"
	-Standardize	"
	-Prefer standardized Spring vacation; facilitates terms of similar length	"
	-Prefer standardized Spring break making two equal terms	Superintendent

Table 4.08 (Continued)

Vacation	Comment	Category
Easter/ Spring	-Prefer traditional Easter vacation	Superintendent
	-Families prefer Easter vacation	"
	-Traditional vacations suit us best	"
	-Prefer longer holiday at Easter to facilitate travel	Principal
	-Prefer standardized Easter for religious reasons	"
	-Prefer Spring vacation; facilitates two terms of similar length	"
	-Prefer traditional vacations	"
	-All vacations should be standardized through legislation	"
	-Prefer Spring vacation; facilitates two terms of similar length	Teacher
	-Prefer late Spring vacation for climatic reasons--better weather	"
	-Prefer Easter; facilitates family holidays	"
	-Prefer traditional Easter for religious reasons	Parent
	-Desire for uniformity	"
	-Prefer Easter; other family members have holiday too	"
	-Prefer Easter; it's a tradition	"
Summer	-Prefer shorter summer but longer Christmas and Easter vacations	Trustee
	-Start after Labour Day; allows for organization days	"
	-Traditional vacation--June 30 to Sept. 5/6 is best	"
	-Traditional vacation--June 30 to Sept.1 suits us best	Superintendent
	-Public surveys advocate normality	"
	-Allow for organization days before Labour Day, open school after	"
	-Prefer traditional summer vacation as it permits 200 instructional days	"
	-Prefer longer summer vacations; it allows for university study	Principal
	-Prefer longer school day and longer summer vacation	"
	-Prefer shorter school year, hence longer summer vacation	"

Table 4.08 (Continued)

Vacation	Comment	Category
Summer	-Extend summer vacation; student productivity in June is low	Principal
	-Prefer shorter school year; hence lengthen the summer vacation	Teacher
	-July and August are good holidaying months; keep the traditional summer	"
	-Traditional summer holidays are most appropriate for farmers	Parent
	-The school year is fine as it is	"
	-Prefer long summer vacation as it facilitates job experience and travel	"
	-Don't begin school before Labour Day	"
	-Summer holidays are too long for younger children	"

The preferences were also examined without consideration for the category of the respondent. Approximately 68 percent of the 1,920 respondents indicated a preference for the traditional Christmas vacation of 8 to 12 days. A significant minority of 30 percent of the respondents would like the Christmas vacation lengthened by as much as one week. Ninety-one percent of the respondents indicated a liking for the traditional Easter or Spring vacation of 8 to 10 days. Sixty percent of the respondents indicated that the summer vacation should be of the traditional length of 63 to 69 days, approximately 13 percent preferred a shorter summer and nearly 28 percent indicated a preference for a longer summer vacation. These findings are illustrated in Table 4.09.

Table 4.09

Percentage Frequency Distribution of Preferences for Christmas, Easter/Spring, and Summer Vacation Durations

Vacation	Duration Number of Days	Percentage of Respondents (N = 1,920)
		%
Christmas	8-12	67.5
	13-17	28.5
	Other	4.0
Easter/Spring	8-10	91.0
	Other	9.0
Summer	56-62	12.5
	63-69	60.0
	70.76	19.0
	Other	8.5

LENGTH OF THE SCHOOL INSTRUCTIONAL YEAR

Respondents were asked to supply information regarding their preferences for the length of the school instructional year, i.e., the number of days that students should be in classrooms during the school year for purposes of instruction. The request was for responses to be given in terms of a comparison with the current school instructional year, 1976-77.

Specifically, the survey asked the following questions:

1. Compared with the 1976-77 school instructional year, the amount of student classroom time for instructional purposes in the 1977-78 year should: (check one)

   (a) be shortened
   (b) be lengthened
   (c) remain the same

   If you checked (a), please respond to question 2, or if you checked (b), please respond to question 3, or if you checked (c), please continue to the next section.

2. The amount of student classroom time for instructional purposes should be reduced by: (check one)

   (a) decreasing the number of instructional days
   (b) decreasing the length of the instructional day
   (c) a combination of (a) and (b)
   (d) other (please specify).

3. The amount of student classroom time for instructional purposes should be increased by: (check one)

   (a) increasing the number of instructional days
   (b) increasing the length of the instructional day
   (c) a combination of (a) and (b)
   (d) other (please specify).

   Are there any particular family, occupational, health or other matters influencing your response? If so, please explain briefly.

Without exception, a bare majority of each of the respondent categories indicated a preference for retaining the school instructional year as it was during the 1976-77 school year. Seventy-two of the trustees, 71 percent of the superintendents, 65 percent of the principals, 54 percent of the teachers and 78 percent of the parents indicated this preference.

Thirty-two percent of the principals and 43 percent of the teachers indicated a preference for reducing the school instructional year, whereas 22 percent of the trustees, 18 percent of the superintendents and 15 percent of the parents preferred that it be lengthened.

When the responses that expressed a preference for a shorter school instructional year were examined a majority of those favouring the change, principals and teachers, indicated a preference for decreasing the number of instructional days in the school year, rather than a shortening of the school instructional day.

When the responses of those preferring a longer school instructional year were examined, a majority of the trustees and the superintendents favoured increasing the number of instructional days, whereas the parents favouring the change expressed approximately equal preferences for increasing the number of instructional days, or increasing the instructional day, or some combination of the two. These findings are presented in Table 4.10.

Table 4.11 presents a summary of the comments given in support of the preferences concerning the length of the instructional year ordered by suggested change and respondent category.

The preferences were also examined without consideration for the category of the respondent. Approximately 30 percent of the 1,874 respondents to this part of the questionnaire indicated a preference for a shorter school instructional year, approximately 7 percent preferred a longer instructional year and the majority, some 63 percent of the respondents, preferred no change in the length of the instructional year. Table 4.12 presents these findings. It also illustrates the change processes preferred as possible means of bringing about the shorter or longer instructional year.

DECISION MAKING RESPONSIBILITIES

The survey asked the following question:

> At what level in the educational system do you believe decisions on each of the following matters concerning the Alberta instructional school year and/or school day should be made? In the space provided following each question, please place the letter that best identifies the level you consider most appropriate:
>
> A. School and Community
> B. School Board or School Committee
> C. Provincial Government
> D. Other (please specify)

Table 4.10

Percentage Frequency Distribution of Respondents' Preferences for the Length of the School Instructional Year by Respondent Category and Change Process

School Instructional Year		Respondent Category				
Length	Change Process	Trustee	Superintendent	Principal	Teacher	Parent
		%	%	%	%	%
Shorter Instructional Year	Fewer Instructional Days	6	9	26	28	4
	Shorter Instructional Day	.	.	2	9	2
	Combination	.	1	4	6	1
	Other	.	1	.	.	.
	Total	6	11	32	43	7
Longer Instructional Year	More Instructional Days	13	13	1	1	4
	Longer Instructional Day	3	1	2	2	4
	Combination	4	3	.	.	4
	Other	2	1	.	.	3
	Total	22	18	3	3	15
No Change		72	71	65	54	78

Table 4.11

Comments Concerning the Length of the School Instructional Year by Proposed Change and Respondent Category

Proposed Change	Comment	Category
Shorten the Instructional year by decreasing the number of instructional days	-Instructional year is too long compared with the U.S., June is an unproductive month; so shorten the year	Trustee
	-Nothing magical about a 200-day year, the instructional year should be shorter	Superintendent
	-Certain elementary students because of busing have the same instructional day as secondary students; their instructional year should be shortened	"
	-Adopt the U.S. model and shorten the instructional year	Principal
	-Shorten the instructional year and provide more time for teacher in-service	"
	-Parents keep students home for farming; schools might as well close	"
	-Teachers are underpaid; so work fewer days for same salary	"
	-Shorten school year to allow for extended Christmas vacation	"
	-Shorten school year and concentrate the content load	"
	-Shorten school year and provide more teacher planning time	"
	-Increase the length of the instructional day and decrease the number of days	"
	-Shorten the school year; schools are too hot in June	"
	-Shorten the year to reduce teacher strain	"

Table 4.11 (Continued)

Proposed Change	Comment	Category
	-Lengthen the instructional day and reduce the number of days	Teacher
	-Shorten the instructional year and allow more planning time	"
	-Shorten the instructional year by extending the Christmas vacation	"
	-If the schools were more efficient and effective, the year could be shorter	"
	-Shorten the instructional year as nothing is being accomplished in the last weeks of June	Parent
	-Increase the daily instructional time and reduce the length of the year	"
	-Make the instructional day more effective and reduce the number of days	"
Shorten the Instructional year by decreasing the length of the instructional day	-Use the time gained for teacher preparation time	Principal
	-The instruction day is too long for students who are bussed to school	"
	-Facilitates more teacher preparation time	Teacher
	-Facilitates time for student counseling	"
	-Concentrate on basics; remove the frills and create a shorter day	"
	-Bussing creates too long a day for small children	Parent

Table 4.11 (Continued)

Proposed Change	Comment	Category
Lengthen the Instructional year by increasing the number of instructional days	-Planning days, organizational days, examination days should not be called instructional days	Trustee
	-If there are more instructional days, students will learn more	"
	-Better to increase the number of days than to lengthen the day to increase learning	"
	-The instructional year should be 200 days for students and longer for teachers	Superintendent
	-The instructional year should be 190-200 days and exclude all days except those on which teachers teach students	"
	-Too many days are wasted on conventions, institute days and organizational days	Teacher
Lengthen the Instructional year by increasing the length of the instructional day	-For bussing reasons and cutting costs	Trustee
	-Increase the length of the instructional day by reducing teacher preparation time	Superintendent

Table 4.12

Percentage Frequency Distribution of Preferences for the Length of the School Instructional Year by Change Process

School Instructional Year Length	Change Process	Percentage of Respondents (N = 1,874)
		%
Shorter Instructional Year	Fewer Instructional Days	21
	Shorter Instructional Day	5
	Combination	4
	Other	0.5
	Total	30.5
Longer Instructional Year	More Instructional Days	3
	Longer Instructional Day	2
	Combination	1
	Other	0.5
	Total	6.5
No Change		63

1. Length of school day
2. Length of Instructional Year
3. Scheduling of holiday (vacation) periods
4. School opening and closing dates
5. Teacher professional and/or organization days

Are there any particular reasons for the selections you made? If so, please explain briefly.

An analysis of the respondent preferences across type of jurisdiction within each respondent category yielded no appreciable differences. The following sections focus, therefore, upon describing the findings obtained when respondent preferences were ordered simply by respondent categories, as indicated in Table 4.13.

Length of School Day

Fifty-eight percent of the trustees, 46 percent of the superintendents, 30 percent of the principals, 23 percent of the teachers and 38 percent of the parents indicated a preference for the school board to be made solely responsible for decisions concerning the length of the school day.

On the other hand, 22 percent of the trustees, 40 percent of the superintendents, 29 percent of the principals, 27 percent of the teachers and 23 percent of the parents preferred that the responsibility be held by the provincial government.

Sizable minorities of principals (25 percent), teachers (36 percent), and parents (32 percent) felt that this matter should be handled by the parents and teachers of individual schools.

Length of the Instructional Year

A majority of trustees, 58 percent, indicated that the responsibility for decisions concerning the length of the instructional year should be handled by the school board alone, whereas, a sizable

Table 4.13

Percentage Frequency Distribution of Respondents' Preferences for the Level at which Decisions Concerning School Year and School Day should be made, by Respondent Category

Type of Decision	Responsibility Level	Respondent Category Trustee	 Superintendent	 Principal	 Teacher	 Parent
		%	%	%	%	%
Length of School Day	School and Community	10	5	25	36	32
	School Board	58	46	30	23	38
	Provincial Government	22	40	29	27	23
	School, Community and Board	6	5	10	6	5
	Board and ATA	0	0	5	6	0
	ATA	0	0	0	2	0
	Other	4	4	1	0	2
Length of Instructional Year	School and Community	3	0	6	13	20
	School Board	52	28	32	25	31
	Provincial Government	36	65	42	44	42
	School, Community and Board	5	4	8	4	5
	Board and ATA	0	0	6	7	0
	ATA	0	0	4	2	0
	Other	4	3	2	5	2
Scheduling of Holidays and/or Vacations	School and Community	7	2	9	19	20
	School Board	64	48	42	32	38
	Provincial Government	16	41	30	28	32
	School, Community and Board	8	5	9	8	5
	Board and ATA	9	9	6	8	0
	ATA	0	0	0	2	0
	Other	5	4	4	3	5

Table 4.13 (Continued)

Type of Decision	Responsibility Level	Respondent Category Trustee	 Superintendent	 Principal	 Teacher	 Parent
		%	%	%	%	%
School Opening and Closing Dates	School and Community	6	2	8	18	18
	School Board	69	40	45	33	40
	Provincial Government	14	47	27	29	33
	School, Community and Board	7	7	11	7	6
	Board and ATA	2	0	7	9	0
	ATA	0	0	0	2	0
	Other	2	4	2	2	3
Teacher Professional and/or Organizational Days	School and Community	6	7	26	38	20
	School Board	70	70	44	32	54
	Provincial Government	8	6	3	4	18
	School, Community and Board	7	7	11	8	4
	Board and ATA	4	5	10	10	0
	ATA	0	0	3	7	0
	Other	5	5	3	1	4

minority (36 percent) felt that the provincial government should have complete control over this matter.

Approximately two-thirds of the superintendents indicated that the provincial government should be solely responsible for the decisions concerning the length of the instructional year compared with approximately one-quarter who preferred that the responsibility be in the hands of the school board.

The largest groups of principals (42 percent), teachers (44 percent), and parents (42 percent) felt that the responsibility should lie with the provincial government, though sizable proportions of them preferred that the responsibility be handled by the school boards [principals (30 percent), teachers (25 percent), and parents (31 percent)].

Allowing the parents and teachers of individual schools to make decisions concerning the length of the instructional year was the preferred choice of 13 percent of the teachers and 20 percent of the parents.

Schedule of School Holidays and Vacations

The school board was the level chosen for determining the scheduling and duration of school holidays and vacations by 64 percent of the trustees, 48 percent of the superintendents, 42 percent of the principals, 32 percent of the teachers, and 38 percent of the parents.

On the other hand, 41 percent of the superintendents, 20 percent of the principals, 28 percent of the teachers and 32 percent of the parents preferred that the provincial government should make the decisions; 20 percent of the parents indicated that they would like the parents and teachers of individual schools to be responsible.

School Opening and School Closing Dates

The largest single group of trustees (69 percent), principals (45 percent), teachers (33 percent) and parents (40 percent) preferred that decisions regarding the setting of school opening and closing dates should be the responsibility of the school board; the largest group of superintendents preferred that this should be a responsibility of the provincial government.

Provincial government responsibility for this matter was also the preference of sizable minorities of the teachers (29 percent) and parents (33 percent).

About one-fifth of the teachers and parents would like these decisions made by the parents and teachers of individual schools.

Teacher Professional and/or Organizational Days

School board responsibility for determining teacher professional and/or organizational days was clearly the preference of a majority of trustees (70 percent), superintendents (70 percent) and parents (54 percent); this was also the preference of 44 percent of the principals and 32 percent of the teachers.

The sharing of responsibility by the parents and teachers of individual schools was the single preference category cited most by teachers (38 percent); a choice shared by 20 percent of the parents.

Table 4.13 illustrates these findings. It also identifies the other levels: school, community and school board; school board and The Alberta Trustees' Association; and The Alberta Teachers' Association alone selected by respondents as levels at which the decisions regarding school year and school day should be made.

The preferences were also examined without consideration for the category of the respondent. Table 4.14 presents these data. Thirty-two percent of the 1,883 respondents to this part of the questionnaire preferred that the school board be the responsible agency for determining the length of the school day; 27.5 percent preferred that the school-community hold that responsibility jointly; and 26.5 percent preferred the provincial government. For determining the length of the instructional year, the provincial government was the choice of 43 percent of the respondents, whereas the school board was the choice of 31 percent of the respondents. The school board was the most preferred agency for determining: the scheduling of holidays and/or vacations (40.5 percent); school opening and closing dates (42 percent); and teacher professional and/or organization dates (45 percent).

An examination of the reasons given in support of the preferences made regarding the questions posed in this part of the survey revealed that the preferences were based upon four areas of concern: the need for local control; the need for provincial uniformity with the uniformity legislated by the provincial government; the need for local autonomy within parameters determined by the provincial government; and the need for local decision-making through collective negotiation. Table 4.15 focuses upon these four areas of concern, presenting a percentage frequency distribution of the reasons given, ordered by respondent category and the five aspects of the school year and school day addressed by this part of the survey. The individual elements in the table represent the percent of a respon-

Table 4.14

Percentage Frequency Distribution of Preferences for the Level at which Decisions Concerning School Year and School Day Should be Made

Type of Decision	Responsibility Level	Percentage of Respondents (N = 1,883)
		%
Length of School Day	School and Community	27.5
	School Board	32.0
	Provincial Government	26.5
	School, Community and Board	7.0
	School Board and ATA	4.0
	ATA	1.0
	Other	2.0
Length of Instructional Year	School and Community	10.0
	School Board	31.0
	Provincial Government	43.0
	School, Community and Board	5.5
	School Board and ATA	4.5
	ATA	2.0
	Other	4.0
Scheduling of Holidays and/or Vacations	School and Community	14.0
	School Board	40.5
	Provincial Government	29.0
	School, Community and Board	8.0
	School Board and ATA	5.0
	ATA	1.0
	Other	2.5
School Opening and Closing Dates	School and Community	13.0
	School Board	42.0
	Provincial Government	28.5
	School, Community and Board	8.5
	School Board and ATA	5.5
	ATA	1.0
	Other	1.5
Teacher Professional and/or Organizational Days	School and Community	26.5
	School Board	45.0
	Provincial Government	6.0
	School, Community and Board	8.0
	School Board and ATA	8.0
	ATA	4.0
	Other	3.5

Table 4.15

Percentage Frequency Distribution of Reasons by Respondent Category, Area of Concern and Type of Decision Concerning School Year and School Day

		Respondent Category				
Type of Decision	Area of Concern (Need for ...)	Trustee	Superintendent	Principal	Teacher	Parent
		%	%	%	%	%
Length of School Day	Local Control	21	11	9	14	14
	Provincial Legislated Uniformity	9	25	10	10	13
	Local Autonomy within Provincial Parameters	11	8	4	0	2
	Local Collective Negotiation	0	0	1	3	0
Length of Instructional Year	Local Control	19	11	7	13	13
	Provincial Legislated Uniformity	12	33	12	17	14
	Local Autonomy within Provincial Parameters	11	8	3	0	2
	Local Collective Negotiation	0	0	1	4	0
Scheduling of Holidays and/or Vacations	Local Control	20	10	8	15	14
	Provincial Legislated Uniformity	8	22	10	14	15
	Local Autonomy within Provincial Parameters	11	8	4	0	2
	Local Collective Negotiation	0	0	1	4	0
School Opening and Closing Dates	Local Control	21	10	8	15	14
	Provincial Legislated Uniformity	8	19	10	12	14
	Local Autonomy within Provincial Parameters	11	8	4	0	2
	Local Collective Negotiation	0	0	1	4	0

Table 4.15 (Continued)

Type of Decision	Area of Concern (Need for ...)	Respondent Category Trustee	 Superintendent	 Principal	 Teacher	 Parent
		%	%	%	%	%
Teacher	Local Control	20	19	10	16	11
Professional	Provincial Legislated Uniformity	3	4	7	1	7
and/or Organizational	Local Autonomy within Provincial Parameters	4	0	4	0	2
Days	Local Collective Negotiation	0	0	1	3	0

dent category that gave a reason for a particular preference regarding that aspect of the school year and school day. Not all respondents made comments, the sum of these elements, therefore, does not equal 100 percent.

SUMMARY

A survey questionnaire to ascertain preferred practices in Alberta schools concerning various aspects of the school year and school day was administered to all trustees, superintendents and principals of the Alberta public and separate school systems, to a sample of teachers in the two systems, and to a sample of parents in the two systems. In all, 216 trustees, 83 superintendents, 608 principals, 781 teachers and 254 parents replied to the questionnaire.

When all possible opening and closing dates for the 1977-78 school year were considered, the most popular single combination was a post-Labour Day opening date of September fifth or sixth and a closing date of June thirtieth. Proportionately more trustees and superintendents favoured a pre-Labour Day opening date, whereas proportionately more principals, teachers and parents preferred a post-Labour Day opening for the schools, particularly as the opening date affected students.

Majorities of each of the groups, trustees, superintendents, principals, teachers and parents indicated a preference for retention of the traditional school vacations, that is, for a Christmas vacation of eight to twelve days, including weekend days, for a Spring or Easter vacation of eight to ten days including Good Friday and weekend days, and for a summer vacation of sixty-three to sixty-nine days or nine to ten weeks. Approximately one-fifth of the superintendents, one-quarter of the principals, and one-third of the teachers indicated that they would like the Christmas vacation lengthened by as much as one week to facilitate travel and winter vacations. One-quarter of the trustees and superintendents were in favour of shortening the summer vacation by as much as one week and, on the other hand, one-quarter of the teachers favoured a longer summer vacation.

Proportionately more members of each of the respondent groups preferred to retain the amount of instructional time in the school year as it presently is than to change either the number of instructional days or the length of the instructional day. Approximately 30 percent of all respondents were in favour of a shorter instructional year compared with only 6 percent who favoured a longer year.

There was less consistency in the responses for the preference items related to the identification of the level, a school and its community, a school board, the provincial government, the Alberta School Trustees' Association, or some combination of these or other agencies, at which matters concerning the school year and school day should be made. When all 1,883 respondents were treated as a single sample, the school board received more preference selections than any of the other levels for having responsibility for making decisions concerning: the length of the school day; the scheduling of vacations and holidays; the opening and closing dates of the schools; and teacher professional and/or organizational days. The provincial government received the most preference selections, approximately 43 percent, for determining the length of the instructional year. Four bases of concern appeared to influence respondents' preferences in assigning responsibility regarding these matters: the need for local control; the need for provincial uniformity; the need for local autonomy within parameters or guidelines determined by the provincial government; and the need for local decision-making through collective negotiation.

Chapter 5

INTERVIEW REPORTS ON ALBERTA SCHOOL YEAR, SCHOOL DAY PRACTICES

Information on the nature of the operationalized practices of Section 139 and 74 of the Alberta School Act (1970), on the perceived problems associated with implementation of those sections of the Act, and preferences concerning the operational practices of those sections of the Act was gathered by interviewing three main sources: selected officers of The Alberta School Trustees' Association, selected officers of The Alberta Teachers' Association; and a sample of superintendents of schools and regional office personnel. This chapter reports on these interview surveys.

An interview questionnaire was developed to ascertain the problems, if any, associated with definition of terms, to ascertain the preferred responsibility level for decision making with regard to the setting of school opening and closing dates and the number of days of classroom instruction, to ascertain the preferred times and lengths of the Christmas and Easter/Spring vacations, and to ascertain if the interviewee's jurisdiction had in the past or was currently experiencing any difficulties brought about either by obtaining substitutes for teachers attending A.R.A.* meetings or by shared bussing arrangements and inconsistent holiday schedules across jurisdictions. The sample was not constructed nor the analysis of the data conducted with a view to deriving statistical generalizations. The following pages therefore focus on the official positions of the A.T.A., the A.S.T.A. and on described practices and attitudes reported during the interviews by superintendents and representatives of regional offices.

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*Annual Representative Assembly of The Alberta Teachers' Association.

THE ALBERTA SCHOOL TRUSTEES' ASSOCIATION

The official position of The Alberta School Trustees' Association concerning the questions being asked by the researchers during this study was stated in a series of four resolutions.

> The ASTA Executive at its June 24-25 (1977) meeting passed the following resolutions with respect to the school year/school day study.
>
> 1. That Association policy 8.C.06 be reiterated with respect to the length of the school year, that is, that the number of days in a given school year in which actual instruction is provided should be a minimum of two hundred.
> 2. That local autonomy be exercised with respect to length of school day and year, scheduling of holiday/vacation periods, school opening and closing dates, and teacher professional and/or organizational days.
> 3. That the Executive not support the school year/school day as a negotiable item.
> 4. That the Executive go on record that a minimum of 1,000 hours per year of instruction time for students can be guaranteed.

THE ALBERTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION REPORT

The official position of The Alberta Teachers' Association concerning the questions being asked by the researchers during this study is stated in the Policy Resolutions of the Association as Policies 3.B.1, 5.A.21, 10.B.1, and 10.B.5[ATA Handbook, 1977, pp. 171-178].

3.B.1 Be It Resolved, that The Alberta Teachers' Association urge the Government of Alberta to amend The School Act [illegible] allow each teacher at least two professional days of the teacher's choice without prejudice to the existing time specified for conventions.

5.A.21 Be It Resolved, that The Alberta Teachers' Association urge the Government of the Province of Alberta to amend The School Act to provide that a board may not require a teacher to teach more than 240 minutes per day.

10.B.1 Be It Resolved, that The Alberta Teachers' Association seek changes in The School Act to provide for a uniform spring break throughout the province.

10.B.2 Be It Resolved, that The Alberta Teachers' Association urge the Government of the Province of Alberta to amend The School Act so as to provide for a maximum school year of 200 days of which not more than 180 days shall be instructional days.

10.B.5 Be It Resolved, that The Alberta Teachers' Association request the Government of the Province of Alberta to amend Section 74 (2) of The School Act by striking "instruct pupils" and inserting "render service."

SUPERINTENDENTS' REPORT

Interviews were conducted with a sample of school superintendents and regional office representatives using an interview questionnaire.

The following questions were asked of each interviewee:

1. How do you define the terms: school day, instructional day, and operational day?

2. What problems, if any, have you encountered that might have been created by confusion of terms?

3. Which level of the educational hierarchy should set the school opening and closing dates?

4. Which level should set the number of days of classroom instruction?

5. Which level should set the number of daily minutes of classroom instruction?

6a. Should the Christmas vacation be standardized? If so, between what dates should the vacation occur?

6b. Should the Easter/Spring vacation be standardized? If so, between what dates should the vacation occur?

7. Does your jurisdiction pay for substitutes for teachers attending ARA?

8. Has your jurisdiction incurred increased bussing costs created by shared bussing arrangements and/or inconsistent holiday or vacation schedules across jurisdictions?

Definition of Terms

The definitions, cited by the respondents, of the terms school day, instructional day, and operational day are not reported in this section of the findings. Instead, they have been used to develop the definitions that form part of the recommendations to be found in the final chapter of this report.

Problems Created by Confusion of Terms

Seventeen of the 47 respondents interviewed reported that they had encountered problems caused by confusion of the terms, school day, instructional day, and operational day; 26 respondents reported that they had had no problems, and 4, whose jurisdictions were involved in regional bargaining arrangements, did not know if they had or not.

The problems cited included:

1. Some schools have extended days, students attend for 4½ days per week and teachers for 5 days. Should the extra ½ day be reported as an instructional day or an operation day?

2. During bussing contract arrangement. Contractors operate only on "student days." Are these instructional or operation days?

3. The negotiation problems that are inherent in the definition of such terms. (This large district refuses to define the terms for this reason.)

4. When attempting to define regulations, e.g., paying part-time teachers.

5. When extending the day for Grade One students.

6. A board declared holiday was interpreted by teachers as an instruction day. This forced the board to reduce the school year.

7. Teachers are negotiating the system into a year of 190 instructional days which they equate with student contact days. We need a minimum of 190 student instruction days and a minimum of 195 teacher operational days.

8. Problem of board declared holidays (e.g., December 23) being counted as an instructional day.

9. Different jurisdictions have different definitions and confusion is caused, particularly with bussing arrangements.

10. Problems during negotiation of the school year--this should not be a negotiable item.

11. What we think should be an operational day The School Act calls an instructional day; clarification needed.

In summary, a number of problems are being caused by a lack of clarity of terms, a number sufficiently large to warrant the need for a precise definition of school day, instructional day and operational day.

Responsibility for Setting School Opening and Closing Dates

Twenty-two of the 47 respondents interviewed reported that the responsibility for setting the school opening and closing date should rest with the local school board. Twenty respondents reported that the dates should be set locally but within government-determined guidelines, and one respondent identified the provincial government with the allowance that the local board could amend these dates under exceptional circumstances.

A majority of the respondents who identified the school board gave as their reason: "the need for local control." Eighteen of the 21 who identified the provincial government gave as their reason:

"the need to remove the hassle of having to negotiate these items."

Responsibility for Setting the Number of Days of Classroom Instruction

Twenty of the 47 respondents interviewed reported that the responsibility for setting the number of instructional days, i.e., the number of days teachers are in classroom contact with students for purposes of instruction, should rest solely with the provincial government, and another 19 respondents wanted the provincial government to set precise parameters within which individual school boards might set their own instructional year. Eight respondents preferred that the responsibility should rest with each local school board.

Responsibility for Setting the Length of the Instructional Day

Twenty-two of the 47 respondents interviewed reported that the responsibility for setting the length of the instructional day should rest with the local school boards but that the provincial government should set and enforce a minimum requirement. Fifteen respondents wanted the local school board to exercise sole control of this matter, whereas 10 respondents selected the provincial government as the sole determining agency.

Satisfaction was expressed by a majority of respondents with the current minimum standard set by the provincial government regarding course lengths at the high school level. Similar arrangements for the junior high and elementary school levels were the common request of a majority of respondents.

The Christmas Vacation: Standardization and Length

Thirty of the 47 respondents interviewed expressed a preference for a standardized Christmas vacation. Of these respondents, 15 reported complete satisfaction with the conditions as currently prescribed in The School Act (1970) and 6 preferred a longer Christmas vacation, the duration not to exceed two full weeks. Seventeen respondents were not in favour of a standardized vacation.

The Easter/Spring Vacation: Standardization and Length

Twenty-five of the 47 respondents interviewed preferred that the vacation be standardized across the province, 19 preferred that the vacation occur at Easter and 6 selected a spring vacation.

Twenty of the 47 respondents reported that they were not in favour of standardization, preferring that the decision should remain a local matter. Of these respondents, 11 expressed a preference for an Easter vacation, 5 preferred a spring vacation and four had no preference.

Two of the 47 respondents had no opinion for or against standardization.

Attendance at A.R.A.

In response to the question, "does your jurisdiction pay for substitutes for teachers attending ARA," there were 11 affirmative statements and 32 negatives. A large majority of the superintendents indicated that this was not a serious problem.

Bussing Costs as a Function of Inconsistent Holiday Schedules

Twelve of the 43 respondents interviewed reported that their jurisdictions had incurred increased bussing costs as a result of shared bussing arrangements or because of inconsistent holiday schedules across jurisdictions. Thirty-one respondents reported no increased costs though four emphasized that inconsistent holiday schedules caused severe problems of coordination.

SUMMARY

Interviews were conducted with selected members of The Alberta School Trustees' Association, selected members of The Alberta Teachers' Association, a sample of 42 Alberta school superintendents, and an officer from each of 5 Regional Offices. Information was sought on the extent of the problems created by possible confusion of the terms related to school year and school day as jurisdictions implemented certain sections of The School Act (1970), notably Sections 139 and 74.

Position statements were received from each of the two associations previously mentioned. These statements revealed a notable difference in the desired length of the school instructional year. The ASTA statement required that the number of days in a given year in which actual instruction is provided should be a minimum of two hundred. ATA policy, on the other hand, urges the provincial government to provide for a maximum school year of two hundred days of which not more than one hundred and eighty days shall be instructional days.

An appreciable number of problems were reported that were caused by a lack of clarity in the meaning of the terms: school day, instructional day and operational day. A need for a precise definition of these terms was expressed by a majority of those interviewed.

Respondents interviewed were equally divided on the question of determining which agency, the school board or the provincial government should have the responsibility for setting the school opening and closing dates.

At least 80 percent of those interviewed reported that the responsibility for setting the number of instructional days should rest with the provincial government, either completely so, or by the government prescribing guidelines within which local school districts might make the final determination.

Proportionately more respondents selected the local school board as the agency best responsible for setting the length of the instructional day. A strong desire was expressed that the provincial government mandate a minimum requirement.

Proportionately more respondents preferred standardized Christmas and Easter vacations to locally determined vacations.

Chapter 6

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The length of the school year, the corresponding length of vacations and holidays, the length of the instructional year for students and the length of the instructional day have varied from one Canadian province to another throughout the years and continue to do so today. The present study examined the current school year and school day practices in Alberta by surveying each of the principals in the provincial public and separate school systems and by reviewing the appropriate sections of the available literature pertaining to school year and school day for the remaining Canadian provinces. In addition, a determination was made of the preferences held by significant interest or stakeholder groups throughout the province of Alberta for school year and school day practices.

Three surveys were carried out to obtain the necessary data. A detailed questionnaire survey of 1314 principals in the public and separate school systems of Alberta returned specific information about school year and school day practices during the 1969-70 school year and the 1975-76 school year. An interview survey of 42 school superintendents, a number of officials from The Alberta School Trustees' Association and The Alberta Teachers' Association, and a representative from each of four of the five Alberta Education Regional Offices returned information on: (1) problems caused by inconsistencies within The School Act, 1970; and (2) stated preferences concerning certain aspects of school year and school day practices. A questionnaire survey of school trustees, superintendents, principals, teachers and parents from across the province returned information concerning preferences for school year and school day practices and the responsibility levels at which decisions concerning these matters should be made.

The conclusions and recommendations arising from the findings of the study are presented in the following pages.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The interview survey of 42 school superintendents and four Regional Office representatives from across the province indicated that a number of problems have been caused by a lack of clarity of the terms: school year, school day, instructional day and operational day as they are currently used in Alberta school systems. The study team, encountering similar definitional problems, established the following definitions for its own use during the conduct of the study.

Definition 1. That "school day" means any day on which teachers are expected to be on duty whether in the classroom, or at workshops, or attending conferences and conventions, or engaged in fulfilling other contractual responsibilities.

Definition 2. That "school year" means a year commencing on the first day of July in a calendar year and ending on the thirtieth day of June in the calendar year next following.

Definition 3. That "instructional day" means any school day when schools are in normal operation and students are in classrooms or other authorized locations, for purposes of instruction and/or evaluation.

Definition 4. That "instructional year" means the sum of all instructional days in a school year.

At the time the study team was deriving conclusions from the data obtained and formulating recommendations, some modification of the above definitions were required. However, the essence of each of the definitions was retained.

SCHOOL OPENING AND CLOSING DATES

Survey of the Literature. Policies pertaining to school opening and closing dates were extracted from the available literature regarding each of the Canadian provinces. Summary data of the school opening and closing dates are presented in Table 6.01.

Table 6.01

Opening and Closing Dates in All Canadian Provinces, 1976-77

Province	Fall Term Opening	Summer Closing
B.C.	September 7	June 29 (Students); June 30 (Teachers)
Alta.	Aug.30 to Sept.7	Varied from June 24 to June 30
Sask.	Aug.26 to Sept.1 Aug.30 to Sept.7	June 30(Teachers) June 30(Students) Varied by Boards
Man.	September 7	June 30
Ont.	September 7	June 30
P.Q.	Sept.1 or later	June 23(Students); June 30 (Teachers)
N.B.	September 7	June 30
N.S.	Sept.1 to Sept.8	No later than June 30 and varied by Boards
P.E.I.	Sept. 8 Sept. 7	June 24(Students) June 30(Teachers)
Nfld.	September 1	June 17

This cross-provincial survey indicated that the most common opening and closing dates for the 1976-77 school year were a post-Labour Day opening date of September 7 and a closing date of June 30.

Survey of Alberta Practices (1969-70; 1975-76). For both school years, 1969-70 and 1975-76, Labour Day fell on September 1 and the vast majority of reporting schools opened on the day following. Most schools closed on June 30, though for the 1969-70 year 81 schools out of 697 closed on the last Friday before June 30, and for the 1975-76 year 131 schools out of 834 closed on this same Friday.

Survey of Preferences. Examination of preferred opening and closing dates for the 1977-78 school year indicated that 70 percent of the 1942 respondents preferred a post-Labour Day opening date, 54 percent of the respondents preferred a closing date of June 30, and 29 percent preferred a closing date of June 23 or earlier.

Conclusion 1

The findings of this study indicate that: a post-Labour Day opening date and a closing date of June 30 is the preference of a majority of each interest group examined--a practice already established in many jurisdictions across the province of Alberta and across the nation.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR SETTING THE SCHOOL OPENING AND CLOSING DATES

Survey of the Literature. A review of the relevant sections of the public school acts and regulations of each of the Canadian provinces concerning the responsibility for setting the school opening and closing dates yielded the information summarized and presented in Table 6.02.

Table 6.02

Level of Decision Making Responsibility for Setting
School Opening and Closing Dates
In All Canadian Provinces

Province	Responsibility Level
B.C.	Department of Education
Alberta	School Boards
Sask.	School Boards
Man.	The Minister
Ont.	The Minister
P.Q.	School Boards
N.B.	The Minister
N.S.	School Boards within parameters determined by The Minister
P.E.I.	Department of Education
Nfld.	The Minister

Survey of Preferences. The largest group of trustees (69 percent), principals (45 percent), teachers (33 percent) and parents (40 percent) preferred that decisions regarding the setting of school opening and closing dates should be the responsibility of Alberta school boards.

Conclusion 2

The findings of this study indicate proportionately more trustees, principals, teachers and parents prefer the school board to set the opening and closing dates for Alberta schools than for any other agency to do so. Many other Canadian provinces delegate similar responsibility to their school boards.

THE SCHOOL YEAR AND THE INSTRUCTIONAL YEAR

Survey of the Literature. Policies pertaining to the school year and the instructional year were extracted from documents relevant to each of the Canadian provinces. Examination of this information was performed and summary data obtained. The summary data for the 1976-77 school year are presented in Table 6.03.

Table 6.03

School Year and Instructional Year in All Canadian Provinces 1976-77

Province	Length of the School Year (Days)	Length of the Instructional Year (Days)
B.C.	197	191
Alta.	(190-200+)[a]	(190-200)[a]
Sask.	200 (min.)	192 (min.)
Man.	200 (max.)	189 (max.)
Ont.	200 (max.)	185 (min.)
P.Q.	200 (max.)	180 (min.)
N.B.	195[b]	182 (max.)[b]
N.S.	195	195 (max.)
P.E.I.	199	192 (max.)
Nfld.	190	182-187

[a] Not specified in Alberta except by inference through Section 74(2) of The School Act which states:

> Unless a teacher agrees, a board may not require a teacher to instruct pupils
>
> (a) for more than 330 minutes during a day, or
>
> (b) for less than 190 or more than 200 days in a school year.

[b] Minister's Memorandum dated February 17, 1976 reduced the stipulated length of the 1976-77 school and instructional years by 2 days to give 193 and 180 days respectively.

This cross-provincial review indicated a range in the lengths of the school year of between 190 and 200+ days and in the length of the instructional year of between 182 and 195 days.

Survey of Alberta Practices (1969-70; 1975-76). The information received from reporting schools indicated that the instructional year in 1969-70 varied considerably in length across the province. Fifty-seven percent of the elementary schools and 62 percent of the junior high schools had instructional years of between 191 and 191.5 days. The instructional year for senior high schools was in many instances of shorter duration due to the fact that more days were spent by these schools in purely examination activities. Seventy-one percent of the senior high schools had an instructional year of less than 190 days, including 25 percent with 180 days or less.

In the 1975-76 school year, 52 percent of the elementary schools reporting and 39 percent of the junior high schools indicated instructional years of between 191 and 191.5 days. The senior high schools again reported shorter instructional years with 77 percent reporting less than 190 days, including 40 percent with less than 180 days.

Examination of the data over the two school years 1969-70 and 1975-76 indicated that a sizeable number of the schools reporting had shorter instructional years in 1975-76 than in 1969-70. Forty percent reported a decrease of between 2 and 5 days and 14 percent reported a decrease of more than 5 days between the two years. On the other hand, 9 percent of the schools reported an increase of more than two days between the two years.

Survey of Preferences. Without exception, a majority of each of the respondent groups indicated a preference for retaining the instructional year as it was perceived to be for the 1976-77 school year.

Conclusion 3

The findings of this study indicate that the interest groups examined have strong preferences for an instructional year of about 190 days. There are strong indications in the information reported by principals that the instructional year decreased in length over the period 1969-75 with the largest percent of schools reporting a decrease of between two and five days. Cross-provincially the length of the instructional year varies between 182 and 195 days.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR SETTING THE LENGTH OF THE SCHOOL YEAR AND INSTRUCTIONAL YEAR

Survey of the Literature. A review of the relevant documents received from each of the Canadian provinces concerning the responsibility for setting the length of school year and the instructional year yielded the information summarized and presented in Table 6.04.

In all of the Canadian provinces with the exception of Alberta and New Brunswick the school year was prescribed by the central authority. In six of the provinces the length of the instructional year was also prescribed by the provincial departments of education or by the Minister. In New Brunswick the decisions were made under a collective agreement between the provincial Treasury Board and the teachers' associations. In Alberta, Saskatchewan and Newfoundland school boards held the responsibility for setting the length of the instructional year.

Table 6.04

Level of Decision Making Responsibility for Setting the Length of the School/Instructional Year in All Canadian Provinces, 1976-77

	Responsibility Level	
Province	School Year	Instructional Year
B.C.	The Minister	Department of Education
Alta.	School Boards	School Boards
Sask.	The Minister	School Boards
Man.	The Minister	The Minister
Ont.	The Minister	The Minister
P.Q.	Department of Education	Department of Education
N.B.	Collective Agreement[a]	Collective Agreement[a]
N.S.	The Minister	The Minister
P.E.I.	Council (Gov't.)	Council (Gov't.)
Nfld.	The Minister	School Boards

[a] Agreement between the provincial Treasury Board and Teachers' Association.

Survey of Preferences. Preferences concerning the level at which decisions should be made about the length of the school/instructional year in Alberta varied among the different respondent groups. Local level decision making was preferred by the largest proportion of trustees (55 percent) and parents (51 percent) whereas provincial level decision making was the choice of the largest proportion of superintendents (65 percent), principals (42 percent) and teachers (44 percent). Of the total of 1883 respondents, the largest proportion (43 percent) chose the provincial government and a slightly smaller proportion (41 percent) expressed a preference for this responsibility to be at the local level.

Conclusion 4

The findings of this study indicate that provincial departments of education in a majority of the Canadian provinces prescribe length of both the school year and the instructional year for their schools. The information from the respondents sampled indicates that preferences for decision making regarding the length of the school/instructional year equally favor the provincial and local levels of operation.

LENGTH OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL DAY

Survey of the Literature. Data received from each of the Canadian provinces concerning the length of the student instructional day yielded the information summarized and presented in Table 6.05.

The length of the instructional day was found to be relatively consistent across the Canadian provinces. Central authorities in all provinces, with the exception of Alberta stipulated the length of the instructional day. In Alberta the prescription was less specific than for the other provinces. Two sections of The School Act, 1970 were found to address the topic. Section 139 (d) states that a school board shall "specify the number of minutes of classroom instruction and the number and length of recesses" and Section 74, in focussing on the instructional day for teachers, states "unless a teacher agrees, a board may not require a teacher to instruct pupils . . . for more than 330 minutes during a day." In addition, Alberta Education regulations and guidelines establish minimum instructional times for all secondary students (See Appendix B).

Table 6.05

Length of the Student Instructional Day in All Canadian Provinces, 1976-77

	Length of Instructional Day (hr.)				
	Elementary (K-VI)		Secondary (VII-XII)		
Province	Minimum	Maximum	Minimum	Maximum	Comments
B.C.	---	5.5	---	6.0	Maximum 25 hr/wk.
Alta.	---	---	---	---	See comments on p. 116
Sask.	5.5	---	5.5	---	Boards may adjust
Man.	5.5	---	5.5	---	Includes recess periods
Ont.	2.5	---			Kindergarten & Gr.I
	5.0	---	5.0	---	Grades II to XII
P.Q.	2.3	2.3			Kindergarten only
	4.6	4.6	5.0	5.0	
N.B.	4.0	4.5			Grades I & II
	5.0	5.5			Grades III to VI
			5.0	5.5	Grades VII to IX
			5.5	6.0	Grades X to XII
N.S.	5.0	6.0	5.0	6.0	Boards may adjust for primary grades
P.E.I.	5.0	---	5.0	---	Boards may adjust for primary grades
Nfld.	2.5	---			Kindergarten only
	4.0	---			Grades I to III
	5.0	---	5.0	---	Grades IV to XI

Survey of Alberta Practices (1969-70 and 1975-76). A large majority of schools at each of the elementary, junior high and senior high levels reported the duration of the instructional day to be approximately 5 hours for both school years, 1969-70 and 1975-76.

Survey of Preferences. Excluding teachers, over 95 percent of all respondents indicated a preference for leaving the length of the instructional day as it was perceived to be in 1975-76. Nine percent of the teachers preferred a shorter instructional day, 89 percent preferred that there be no change in the length of the instructional day.

Conclusion 5

The findings of this study indicate that the length of the student instructional day remained stable at or about five hours in the majority of Alberta schools during the period 1969-75. An instructional day of about five hours also appears to be the norm across Canada.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR SETTING THE LENGTH OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL DAY

In all provinces, with the exception of Alberta, the length of the instructional day was stipulated by the provincial departments of education with a provision in certain cases for adjustment by local school boards. In Alberta, responsibility for setting the length of the instructional day rests with local boards which, in turn, must provide for minimum hours of instruction for secondary students in accordance with provincial regulations.

Survey of Preferences. Proportionately more trustees (58 percent), superintendents (46 percent), principals (30 percent) and parents (38 percent) indicated a preference that local school boards set the length of the instructional day. Proportionately more teachers (36 percent) preferred that the local school and its community do so. A clear majority of all respondent groups indicated that the preference was for the provincial government not to make decisions relative to the length of the instructional day.

Conclusion 6

The findings of this study indicate that the interest groups examined have strong preferences for the school boards in Alberta to have responsibility for setting the length of the instructional day. This preference is in marked contrast to the prevailing tendency in other provinces where the instructional day is prescribed at the provincial level.

DURATION AND SCHEDULING OF CHRISTMAS VACATIONS

Survey of the Literature. A review of the relevant documents received from each of the Canadian provinces concerning the scheduling and duration of the Christmas vacations yielded the information presented in summary form in Table 6.06.

The practice in Alberta regarding authorization of the Christmas vacation differed from that in most other provinces. Both provincial and local responsibility were involved. The School Act prescribed a minimum period of December 24 through January 2 but boards were allowed to extend that period an unspecified number of days if they so desired.

Survey of Preferences. Preferences regarding the duration of the Christmas vacation period as expressed by trustees, superintendents, principals, teachers and parents indicated that a majority of the respondents, 68 percent, wished to retain the traditional Christmas break between December 24 and January 2, with a minority, 28.5 percent, wishing to see it extended about one week, primarily, as stated in their comments, to facilitate travel.

Opinions were more divided on who should be responsible for setting vacation periods such as the Christmas vacation period. Of the choices available, the school board was the decision-making level chosen most frequently by each of the groups with the provincial government the second preference.

Table 6.06

Duration of and Responsibility Level for Scheduling the Christmas Vacations in All Canadian Provinces 1976-77

Province	Duration	Responsibility Level
B.C.	Dec. 20 to Jan. 3[a]	Department of Education
Alta.	Dec. 24 to Jan. 2 (min)[a]	The Minister (Boards may extend)
Sask.	Dec. 23 to Jan. 2[a,b]	School Boards
Man.	Dec. 24 to Jan. 2[a]	The Minister
Ont.	Dec. 23 to Jan. 2[a]	The Minister
P.Q.	Dec. 24 to Jan. 2 (min)[a]	School Boards
N.B.	Two weeks beginning on Saturday of week preceding Christmas	The Minister
N.S.	Christmas, New Year's Day, and an additional 5-10 days	The Minister (Boards specify additional days)
P.E.I.	Dec. 24 to Jan. 2[a]	Department of Education
Nfld.	Open	Department of Education School Boards

[a] Dates inclusive.

[b] School boards responsible for setting. The period indicated was offered as an illustration in a memorandum from the Department of Education to school boards.

Conclusion 7

The findings of this study indicate the preference expressed by respondents is for retaining the duration of the Christmas vacation as traditionally practiced and that the responsibility for setting this vacation period should rest with Alberta school boards.

DURATION AND SCHEDULING OF EASTER/SPRING VACATION

Survey of the Literature. Findings resulting from a review of relevant literature concerning the duration and scheduling of Easter/Spring vacations in Canadian provinces is presented in summary form in Table 6.07.

Table 6.07

Duration of and Responsibility Level for Scheduling the Easter/Spring Vacation in All Canadian Provinces 1976-77

Province	Duration	Responsibility Level
B.C.	Mar. 28 to April 4	Department of Education
Alta.	Open	School Boards
Sask.	Open	School Boards
Man.	Full week beginning on the last Monday in March	Department of Education
Ont.	Mar. 21 to Mar. 25	The Minister[a]
P.Q.	Open	School Boards
N.B.	Third week in March	The Minister
N.S.	Full week in March	The Minister
P.E.I.	Third week in March	Department of Education
Nfld.	Open	School Boards

[a] Boards may adjust subject to the approval of the Minister.

Survey of Alberta Practices (1969-70; 1975-76). Approximately one half of the school jurisdictions reported a fixed spring vacation of five days commencing on the last Monday in March and approximately one half of the jurisdictions reported an Easter vacation commencing on Good Friday and continuing throughout the following week.

Survey of Preferences. Data obtained from the preferences questionnaire indicated a high degree of consistency across the responding groups with 91 percent of the respondents seeking a one week break between the Christmas and summer vacations. The comments of respondents tended to indicate three major preferences. They were preferences for: (1) a fixed Spring vacation as it facilitates two school terms of similar length; (2) the traditional Easter vacation for religious reasons; and (3) a standardized vacation period regardless of dates which would facilitate provincial uniformity of practice.

As indicated earlier in the reference to the Christmas vacation, opinions regarding who should be responsible for setting vacation dates were that the responsibility should remain with local school boards.

Conclusion 8

The findings of this study indicate a divergence in both practice and preference concerning the scheduling of the Easter/ Spring vacation with jurisdictions about equally divided in their practices of an Easter vacation or a Spring break and with respondents similarly divided in their preferences for one or the other. The school board is the preferred responsibility level for setting the vacation regardless of when it occurs.

NUMBER AND SCHEDULING OF PROFESSIONAL/ORGANIZATIONAL DAYS

Survey of the Literature. A review was made of relevant documents received from each of the Canadian provinces concerning the number and scheduling of professional/organizational days. The review revealed for the 1976-77 school year some provision was made for such days in all provinces. The general pattern found was for the provincial authority to stipulate, most frequently as a maximum, a number of school days to be devoted to professional/organizational activity. With due reference to the designated figure and established guidelines, school boards were generally permitted to schedule such days. The provisions made in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland tended to be unique in that they were dependent, to varying degrees, on agreements involving teacher organizations. According to the information available, the 1976-77 school year provision for professional/organizational days in the various provinces was as shown by Table 6.08.

Table 6.08

Number of Professional/Organizational Days Provided in All Canadian Provinces 1976-77

Province	Number of Days
British Columbia	6 (minimum)
Alberta	2 (minimum)
Saskatchewan	8 (maximum)
Manitoba	11 (maximum)
Ontario	12 (maximum)
Quebec	20 (maximum)
New Brunswick	13 (minimum)
Nova Scotia	9 (maximum)[a]
Prince Edward Island	5 (maximum)
Newfoundland	8 (maximum)

[a] The number of days indicated were derived from the "standard school calendar" for 1977-78. It has been assumed that similar provisions existed for the 1976-77 school year.

The only relevant reference encountered for the provision of professional or organizational days within the Alberta school year was that found in Section 74(1) of The School Act, 1970 which states:

> In this section "day" or "day in a school year" means a day on which instruction is given by a teacher and includes emergency school closures, school closures approved by the Minister, two days for teacher conventions, holidays declared by a board and days other than instruction days that are approved by the Minister.

The reference to the "two days for teacher conventions" was taken to mean two days for professional development endeavors.

Survey of Practices (1969-70; 1975-76). Information provided by the principals' survey indicated that the number of schools having professional/organizational days increased between 1969-70 and 1975-76 and that the average number of such days held by individual schools also increased between those years.

Survey of Preferences. No specific information was gathered in this study on preferred numbers of professional/organizational days but it seems appropriate to note that, as expressed in their comments, a number of teachers who wished to see the instructional year shortened were indicating a preference for an increase in the number of days to be used for planning purposes.

Preferences were gathered on the question of who should hold responsibility for determining the number of professional/organizational days. A clear majority of trustees, superintendents and parents preferred to leave the matter in the hands of the school boards. A large proportion (44%) of the principals similarly preferred that the school board be the responsible agency. Teachers, on the other hand, were more divided in their opinions with an appreciable minority wishing the issue to be settled at the school-community level. Many teachers who offered comments, expressed the opinion that the number of professional/organizational days was a matter for negotiation at the school board level.

Conclusion 9

The findings of this study indicate that: (1) a majority of Canadian provinces have some type of legislation or regulation governing the number of and responsibility for scheduling professional/organizational days, while Alberta does not; (2) the number of professional/organizational days provided within a school year increased over the period 1969-75; and (3) proportionately more respondents preferred the school board, over any other agency, to hold responsibility concerning the setting of the professional/organizational days.

ANCILLARY FINDINGS

Interviews conducted during this study, in addition to permitting amplification of the information obtained from the survey questionnaires, provided data on two questions the study team agreed to address after the assignment had been originally accepted. Specifically, the two questions were:

1. To what extent had school districts incurred additional substitute teacher costs because the holding of the Annual Representative Assembly (A.R.A.) of The Alberta Teachers' Association (A.T.A.) did not coincide with Easter/Spring vacation periods?

2. To what extent had school districts incurred additional bussing costs because of the combination of shared bussing arrangements and conflicting holiday schedules?

Increased Substitute Teacher Costs. Information provided by the 42 superintendents interviewed revealed that in very few cases did a jurisdiction encounter increased substitute costs because of delegate attendance at A.R.A. meetings. In most cases, any substitute costs resulting from a conflict between the days of the A.R.A. and a jurisdiction's scheduled vacation period, were borne by the A.T.A. In those few cases where the additional costs were assumed by the jurisdiction, this was done because of a collective agreement commitment.

Increased Bussing Costs. Interviews held with superintendents indicated that increased bussing costs seldom occurred because of incompatible holiday schedules. The reason, it was found, was that where shared bussing arrangements exist the parties involved tend to adopt a common school calendar.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Comments made by practicing administrators and government personnel gave credence to the early observation of the study team members that there exists a need to reduce the terminological ambiguities associated with the school year and school day. Time and again during the interview sessions conducted in the field reference was made to problems created because of the lack of standard definitions for commonly used terms. Therefore, with the intent of providing for terminological standardization and bearing in mind the information obtained from across Canada as well as the study findings about Alberta legislation, practices and preferences, the following four recommendations are made.

Recommendation I.

That the Provincial Government define "school year" to mean a year commencing on the first day of July and ending on the thirtieth day of the following June and which contain 200 school days.

Recommendation II.

That the Provincial Government define "school day" as any day on which:

1. A teacher is obligated by contract to be engaged in
   - (a) providing instruction to, or supervision of, pupils in the classroom or in other locations approved by the school board, or
   - (b) board approved professional development or organizational activity.
2. A school is closed for reasons approved by the Government or the Minister of Education.

Recommendation III.

That the Provincial Government define "instructional year" to mean the sum, which must be at least equal to 180, of all instructional days in a school year.

Recommendation IV.

That the Provincial Government define "instructional day" to mean any school day on which a student is expected to be present in a designated classroom, facility, or any other location approved by the school board for the purpose of receiving instruction, being evaluated, or for any other reason approved by the board.

While the overall results of the inquiry provided little evidence of a need to curtail the discretionary decision-making powers currently held by school boards in matters related to the school year and school day, the study revealed a widespread preference that the instructional year should commence after Labour Day and end not later than the last school day in June. While sensitive to the possibility that some localities may desire to have instructional days in July or August, the study team, because of the weight of declared preferences and traditional practice, suggests that considerable caution be exercised before any jurisdiction mandates student attendance at school in these two months. Therefore, proposed is:

Recommendation V.

That the Provincial Government prescribe that school boards not be able to require students at any grade level to receive instruction from the first day of July to after Labour Day in any school year without the expressed consent of the Minister of Education.

During the course of the inquiry the members of the study team became increasingly aware of the need to assure that a minimum amount of instructional time will be made available for all students in a particular school year. Examination of data concerning practices throughout Canada revealed a common tendency for provincial authorities to provide such an assurance by specifying both a minimum number of instructional days for the school year and a minimum length of time for each instructional day. In a number of provinces the provincial authorities issued school calendars which stipulated school opening and closing dates, vacation periods and school holidays. Sometimes the stipulations were found to be so specific and all encompassing that little discretionary power was available at the local level of operation.

Study findings revealed that in Alberta there is a strong and widespread desire that school boards should have considerable latitude in making decisions about the school year and school day. After exploring a number of possibilities, the study team concluded that the approach currently used to establish minimal instructional time requirements for Alberta secondary school students could reasonably serve both the expressed preferences for local level decision-making and the need for minimum instructional time requirements for all students. By using this approach minimum time requirements would be specified for particular courses or grades and not for the length of the instructional day and the organizational flexibility required to accommodate unique local preferences and conditions would be permitted. As a result of its findings and deliberations pertaining to the need for assured instructional time for students, the study team submits:

Recommendation VI.

> That the Minister of Education set regulations prescribing a minimum number of hours of instructional activity to be provided in any instructional year for students at all grade levels, and

that the minima be in keeping with the annual amounts of instructional time currently available.

Bearing in mind the expressed preference for local level decision-making revealed by the study, submitted is:

Recommendation VII.

That the Provincial Government grant to school boards the authority needed to make possible the wide variety of operational modes and organizational structures concerning the school year and school day which would be consistent with and permitted by the foregoing regulations.

While the study team members were not favorably disposed to the issuance of a common provincial school calendar, they did see a need for an instructional year calendar to be developed and distributed by the professional staff of every school early in the instructional year. Such a calendar would serve to convey to parents and students information essential for them to adequately plan for holidays and vacations, parent and student work requirements, child care, and the like. Recognizing fully that many Alberta schools do construct and distribute such a calendar, the members of the study team were of the opinion that the need of families and individuals to know as early as possible the proposed design of the instructional year was sufficiently great to justify the requirement of this procedure for all schools. Therefore, submitted is:

Recommendation VIII.

That the Minister of Education set regulations that would require all schools to provide students and parents with a calendar of the instructional year. Such a calendar should:

1. Clearly indicate all instructional days in the school year and other school days, and
2. Be made available within five days of the first instructional day in the school year.

Many times throughout the course of the inquiry the members of the study team had cause to question the adequacy of the school year/school day data. On a number of occasions the team was informed that the information sought about the practice of Alberta schools in the 1969-70 and 1975-76 school years was either not available or could only be supplied with what was declared to be an inordinate expenditure of time and energy. Also, as the study progressed it became increasingly apparent that there exists a need for systematic, coordinated and comprehensive research if the dimensions of time related operational problems are to be fully understood and substantial improvements effected. As a result of these observations, the study team submits the following two recommendations for consideration.

Recommendation IX.

That the Provincial Government each year obtain from all school jurisdictions such information as is required to accurately monitor compliance with regulations pertaining to the instructional year, school year, and minimum hours of instruction available for students.

Recommendation X.

That the Minister of Education initiate regional, provincial and national studies pertaining to (a) student time commitments by grade level and subject area, (b) teacher workload, and (c) public perceptions of the educational system and its operation.

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APPENDIX A

EXTENSION OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL DAY

Introduction

As noted in Chapter 1, after the initial contract for the School Year/School Day study had been agreed to by all parties, the Steering Committee requested that the project team obtain information regarding average teacher-student contact time in school related activities outside of regular instructional hours. The project team agreed to this request and accordingly the sample of 1275 teachers involved in this study received an "Extension of the 1975-76 Instructional Day for Professional Staff" questionnaire.

Specifically, teachers were asked to provide two kinds of data. First, background information was sought from the respondents concerning (a) their subject specialty (if any), (b) the level at which the majority of their teaching was done, elementary, junior high, or senior high, and (c) the type of jurisdiction in which they were employed, school division or county, city public, city separate, rural public or rural separate. Second, to obtain a measure of teacher-student contact time outside of regular instructional hours each respondent was asked:

> On the average during the 1975-76 school year, how many minutes per week did you spend with students in school-related activities (e.g., counseling, noon hour supervision, other supervision, sports, clubs, etc.) outside of regular instructional hours.

The data obtained are reported for elementary teachers in

Table A.01, for junior high teachers in Tables A.02 and A.03, and for senior high teachers in Tables A.04 and A.05.

Elementary School

As indicated in Table A.01, two hundred and fifty-eight usable returns were received from elementary teachers across the province of Alberta. The amount of teacher-student contact time outside regular instructional hours varied from a low of about two hours per week for city separate teachers to a high of about two hours and forty-five minutes per week for city public teachers. When the teachers were included whose type of jurisdiction was unknown, the upper end of the range was extended to almost four hours per week. The average for all two hundred and fifty-eight elementary teachers was 161 minutes, or about two hours and forty minutes per week.

Table A.01

Teacher-Student Contact Time Outside Regular Instruction Hours in Elementary Schools, 1975-76, by Number of Respondents and Type of Jurisdiction

Jurisdiction	Number of Respondents	Teacher-Student Contact Time (Average mins/week)
County/Division	85	149
City Public	100	164
City Separate	16	123
Rural Public	40	152
Unknown	17	238
TOTAL	258	

Note: The sampling plan used to select teacher respondents excluded teachers from rural separate school systems.

Junior High School

As indicated in Table A.02, one hundred and seventy-four usable returns were received from junior high school teachers. An analysis of the data performed across the type of jurisdiction within each teaching specialty yielded little information due to the complete lack of responses in certain categories and low response frequencies in other categories. An examination was then performed of the average amount of teacher-student contact time across teaching specialities. These date are presented in Table A.03.

Table A.02

Frequency of Responses by Type of Jurisdiction
and Teaching Specialty from Junior High Schools

Jurisdiction	Number of Respondents
County/Division	60
City Public	72
City Separate	9
Rural Public	26
Unknown	7
	174

Note: The sampling plan used to select teacher respondents excluded teachers from the rural separate school systems.

Twenty-six social studies teachers reported an average of 2 hours and thirty minutes of time spent with students per week in school-related activities outside regular instructional hours, whereas twenty-seven physical education teachers reported an average of eight hours and thirteen minutes per week. Due to the low response frequencies, the reliability of any interpretations made of these findings is most questionable. In summary, it may be said that the amount of teacher-student contact time outside regular instructional time for physical education teachers was, on the average, considerably higher than for any other teaching specialty group at the junior high school level.

Table A.03

Teacher-Student Contact Time Outside Regular Instructional Hours in Junior High Schools, 1975-76, by Teaching Specialty and Number of Respondents

Teaching Specialty	Number of Respondents	Teacher-Student Contact Time (Average mins/week)
Social Studies	26	150
Industrial Arts	9	153
Guidance/Counselling	8	159
Language Arts	43	168
Maths/Science	55	221
Home Economics	6	294
Physical Education	27	493
Total	174	

Senior High School

Table A.04 reports the response frequencies for senior high school teachers by type of jurisdiction and teaching specialty. As indicated in this table, two hundred and twenty usable returns were received.

Again, as was the case with data from the junior high schools, response frequencies for individual cells were examined across type of jurisdiction and teaching specialty were too small to permit reasonable comparisons to be made. Therefore, the data were exam-

Table A.04

Frequency of Responses by Type of Jurisdiction and Teaching Specialty from Senior High Schools

Jurisdiction	Number of Respondents
County/Division	65
City Public	70
City Separate	30
Rural Public	47
Unknown	8
Total	220

Note: The sampling plan used to select teacher respondents excluded teachers from rural separate school systems.

Table A.05

Teacher-Student Contact Time Outside Regular Instructional Hours in Senior High Schools, 1975-76, by Teaching Specialty and Number of Respondents

Teaching Specialty	Number of Respondents	Teacher-Student Contact Time (Average mins/week)
Home Economics	3	83
Guidance	2	90
Business Education	26	124
English	31	170
Social Studies	28	171
Vocational Education	15	171
Maths/Science	77	229
Modern Languages	9	297
Music	2	480
Physical Education	25	514
Art	2	575
	220	

ined across teaching specialty only. These results are presented in Table A.05.

Response frequencies for six of the teaching specialties were too small to permit any conclusions to be drawn from the data. For those categories that contained 25 or more respondents, Business Education, English, Social Studies, Maths/Science and Physical Education, comparisons suggested that teachers in these disciplines were devoting between 2 hours and eight hours and 30 minutes per week in school-related activities outside regular instructional hours. Physical Education teachers reported the greatest amount of time spent in these kinds of activities.

Summary

Findings from the information received from teachers concerning the amount of teacher-student contact time in school-related activities outside regular instructional hours were inconclusive due to the low return rate of responses from teachers in several of the teaching specialty areas in both junior and senior high schools. It appears from the limited information received that, at both the junior and senior high school levels, physical education teachers expended a larger amount of time in contact with students in school-related activities outside regular instructional hours than teachers in other teaching specialties. Also, when physical education teachers were excluded, the average amount of this type of contact time expended by teachers was similar for each school level, elementary, junior high and senior high, and varied approximately between two and four hours per week for each school level.

APPENDIX B

EXCERPTS FROM JUNIOR-SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL HANDBOOK, 1977-78

I. JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

A. CATEGORIES OF SUBJECTS

Full details regarding the general objectives and content of certain of the subjects listed are to be found in the Program of Studies and are developed further in the respective curriculum guides.

The subjects for study in the junior high school fall into the three categories that follow:

1. Core Subjects

The compulsory subjects are: Language Arts, Social Studies, Mathematics, Science, and Physical Education and Health.

2. Group A Options

The Group A options include the cultural and practical arts. These subjects are taken on an elective basis but the range of subjects offered should be based on the human and material resources of the school. Course outlines are provided and should be studied carefully.

3. Group B Options

These are the general electives. The range of subjects offered should be based on the human and material resources of the school. Course outlines are not provided.

Special Notes Regarding A & B Options

The chief purpose of these subjects in the junior high school program is to give every pupil an opportunity to explore his own growing interests and abilities in cultural, practical and academic subjects in addition to those taken as compulsory. It is not intended, however, that experiences in these subjects should end in the mere satisfaction of the pupil's curiosity regarding the nature of the courses sampled. It is equally important that the interests of the pupils be carefully cultivated and that special abilities, where they appear, be developed to the maximum. Group A options are exploratory in nature; Group B options are for enrichment.

B. STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAM

Minimum time allotment for core subjects shall be:
(hours per course)

Language Arts	150
Mathematics	100
Physical Education and Health	75
Science	100
Social Studies	100

Note 1

A minimum of 25 hours of the total time allotted for instruction shall be devoted to Group Guidance at the Grade IX level. In Grades VII and VIII Group Guidance may be given at the discretion of the local school authorities.

Note 2

The Health course may be concentrated in a single year of the junior high school program.

Note 3

In schools utilizing a language other than English as the language of instruction, (as per Section 150 of the School Act), time allotments for language arts and second languages may be combined and apportioned for the development of an appropriate program in each language.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING OPTIONS

Most systems will offer option programs outlined below. However, where there are concerns arising from conditions of resources of personnel and materials, time considerations, and community wishes, it is pointed out that the recommendations are strongly encouraged but not mandatory.

1. Selection of Options

Each year the student should select one of the following programs in addition to core subjects:

a. Four options from Group A.

b. Three options from Group A and one from Group B.

c. Two options from Group A and two from Group B.

d. One option from Group A and three from Group B.

2. Group A Options (Cultural and Practical Arts) Course outlines are provided.

The minimum time allotment for each option should be 75 hours.

- Agriculture
- Art
- Drama
- French
- German
- Home Economics
- Industrial Arts
- Latin
- Music (General)
- Music (Choral)
- Music (Instrumental)
- Typewriting
- Ukrainian

3. Group B Options (General Electives) Course outlines are not provided.

The minimum time allotment for each option should be 50 hours.

Note A

The general electives in Mathematics, Science, Language Arts, Social Studies, Physical Education and Health, and Languages other than English, have no provincially prescribed course outlines. It is anticipated that schools or school districts will structure the courses so that the topics investigated do not substantially overlap the topics investigated in Junior High core courses or Senior High courses.

Note B

Science may be a general course or may concentrate on one aspect of the course such as:

- Astronomy
- Biology
- Geology
- Physical Science

Note C

Language Arts may be a general course or may concentrate on one aspect of the course such as:

- Creative Writing
- Literature
- Oral Skills including Public Speaking and Debate
- Reading

Note D

Social Studies may be a general course or may concentrate on one aspect of the course such as:

- Community Economics
- Community Resources
- Comparative Religions
- Economics
- Geography
- History
- Psychology
- Social Problems
- Sociology

Note E

Physical Education and Health may be a general course or may concentrate on one aspect of the course such as:

- Drug Education
- Fitness
- Outdoor Education

Note F

Courses in languages other than English may be developmental for purposes of improving basic communication skills through a variety of creative and expressive experiences. However, courses may also emphasize other aspects of language such as:

- Phonology
- Creative Speech
- History of Language
- Language Structure
- Comparative and/or General Linguistics
- Culture

4. General Comments Regarding Options

a. The content of the options may be adapted to the interests of the pupil, the needs of the community and the special abilities of the teacher. Furthermore, for the purpose of individualizing a student's program some pupils may, in addition to their choice of options, elect as enrichment to pursue in depth some specific aspects of their chosen options.

b. Independent study by pupils should be encouraged. Such study may be carried out within the time limit allotted to subject areas, under the directions of the instructors responsible for those areas.

c. Choice of options from the range offered should be made by the pupil. Guidance should be made available to him for this choice. In general, selection of Group B options should be made on the basis of strength rather than weakness.

II. SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

A. ORGANIZATION OF SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAMS

1. Definitions of High Schools

A standard instruction-time high school is one in which there are one or more high school teachers per grade.

A small high school is one in which the ratio of high school teachers to high school grades is less than one.

2. Numbering Systems of High School Courses

All courses are numbered in decades. Numbers 10 - 19 are for Grade X courses, numbers 20 - 29 for Grade XI courses, and numbers 20 - 39 for Grade XII courses.

EXAMPLE:

Grade X	Grade XI	Grade XII
English 10	Social Studies 20	Typewriting 30
Science 11	Drama 20	French 31
Beauty Culture 12	Music 21	Latin 30

3. The Length of the High School Program

A pupil may complete the high school program in three years by obtaining about 35 credits per year. The total required for a high school diploma is 100 credits.

Flexibility is achieved in the following ways:

a. Instruction time per course is stipulated only in terms of total hours per course.

b. Some courses have variable credit value. For example, P.E. 10 may be offered for 2, 3, 4, or 5 credits.

c. Half courses are allowed. A "half course" is any three-credit course taught every day for half a year or the equivalent of every other day for a full year, i.e., 3 credits are available for a course receiving instruction time equivalent to 2½ credits.

4. Time--Credit Relationship

Regardless of whether a school is organized on a quarter, semester, trimester or 10-month basis for instructional purposes, it is required that a total of at least 25 hours per credit be assigned for purposes of instruction, examinations, and other activities directly related to the course for which credit is to be granted. Thus a 5-credit course, would be assigned a minimum of 125 hours; a 3-credit course, a minimum of 75 hours unless it was offered as a "half course", in which case the minimum would be 62.5 hours.

A school may provide more than minimum time for any course.

B. SMALL HIGH SCHOOLS

1. Definition of a Small High School

A small high school is one in which the ratio of high school teachers to high school grades is less than one. This definition includes all schools of less-than-standard instruction time.

2. Designation of Small High Schools

The above definition includes:

a. Category Description

1. One teacher for Grade VII-IX, and in addition some high school credits.

b. Category

1a. One Teacher for Grade IX-X inclusive.
1b. One Teacher for Grades X-XI inclusive.
2a. Two Teachers for Grades IX-XII inclusive.
2b. Two Teachers for Grades X-XII inclusive.
3a. Three Teachers for Grade IX-XII inclusive.

3. Objectives of this Part of the Handbook

The procedures described hereunder are designed to reduce in some measure the program limitations of the small high school by:

a. increasing the instruction time for each course.

b. increasing the number of credits that may be obtained by the students in any small high school, and thus providing greater opportunities to complete their high school programs in three years.

c. improving teaching and learning conditions by reducing the number of classes which must be taught daily.

d. making possible the offering of a wider program.

4. Guiding Principles for Organization of the Program

a. The first demands upon instruction time in any small high school should be to provide complete programs (at least 35 credits) in Grades X and XI, or 18 credits per semester in Grades X and XI.

b. Grade X and XI programs should be planned in such a manner as to prepare both matriculation students and non-matriculation students to complete high school in three years, locally or elsewhere, or by using correspondence courses in Grade XII as required.

c. Where Grade XII is taught, English 30 should be the nucleus of the yearly program, inasmuch as it satisfies both matriculation and non-matriculation requirements.

d. It is advised that, in small high schools, Industrial Arts courses be selected generally from Industrial Education 10, 20 and 30.

e. It is recommended that Home Economics courses be selected from Clothing and Textiles 10, Food Science 10, and Modern Living 10.

f. Instruction time which remains available should be used for such purposes as the following:

  (i) To reduce double-programming in order to overcome crowded classes.

  (ii) To reduce double-programming in order to provide separate instruction for Grade X and XI.

  (iii) To increase the effectiveness of the school as a whole, through closer scrutiny of pupils' work, additional teaching drill and review, expansion of the testing program, more thorough teaching planning and preparation and more effective guidance generally.

  (iv) To enrich the program.

g. Correspondence courses may be used to augment the program.

5. Directions for Scheduling

The total enrolment in any course, resulting from combining classes of two grades, may be a factor determining the extent to which the suggested arrangements will be employed. Examples of such arrangements are:

a. It is recommended that the minimum period scheduled for industrial arts and home economics courses be 80 minutes in length.

b. Any two sequent courses may be taught in the same period.

c. When any two sequent courses are taught in the same period of time an attempt should be made to provide more than minimum instruction time.

d. To assure the fullest possible program in every year of high school, certain courses could be alternated over a two-(or even three-) year period.

e. Grade XII diploma students who are taking English 30 or English 33 should take two additional Grade XII courses for at least 5 credits each, together with enough Grade X and XI courses to enable them to receive 100 credits in three years.

6. Minimum Instruction Time

The minimum number of hours instruction time for small high schools should be as shown on the chart below.

Category of School	Description of School	Total Instruction Time Per Credit (minimum)
1a	1 room Grades IX-X Incl.	18 hours
1b	1 room Grades X-XI Incl.	20 hours
2a	2 rooms Grades IX-XI or IX-XII	20 hours
2b	2 rooms Grades X-XII	20 hours
3a	3 rooms Grades IX-XII Incl.	20 hours